TREATISE

OF

Sacramental Covenanting

WITH

CHRIST:

SHEWING

The ungodly their contempt of Christ, in their Contempt of the Sacramental Covenant.

And calling them (not to a profanation of this holy Ordinance, but) to an understanding, serious entire Dedication of themselves to God in the Sacramental Covenant, and a Believing Commemoration of the Death of Christ.

The FOURTH EDITION.

With a Preface chiefly designed for the satisfaction of Diffenters, and to exhort all Men to Peace and Unity:
Not before Printed.

By 7. Randet

Printed by T. James for Sam. Tidmarsh, at the Kings Head in Cornhil, next house to the Royal Exchange, 1682.

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PREFACE.

Intend not to trouble the Reader with any particular Account of the occasion of my Writing this plain Freatife (which was composed and first published many years ago) nor with Apologies for its plain-ness, or any other fault that may be found withit! Since I endeavoured as well as I could to fit it to the Design I had in making it. What that was . I need fay little bere, baving abready said so much to that purpose, by way of Introduction in the first Chapter. The Title is felf may sufficiently inform bim, that the Design of it is to exhort and perfovade Men carefully to prepare themfelves, and then with due Reverence and Seriou nefs to frequent the Holy Communion, as they would approve themselves to be the true Disciples of the Lord Jesus, who bath commanded us to Do this in remembrance of him. But my chief Intention in writing this Preface, is to do what I am capable toward the removing of those Scruples, and answering those Objections, which may binder any bonest and well-meaning Persons from their Attendance on this Holy Ordinance: Such I mean as are oft put into their Heads, by those who would draw them into a Separation from our Church. Some Objections of another Nature I have answered in the Book

Book it self, but did not then think it needful to meddle with these, because I found not that the People, for whose fake chiefly it was first written, were much troubled with them: Nor do I now intend to launch out into any large Discourse about these Matters, which have fill'd so many Books of Controversie; after all which I dare not pretend to say any thing new in the Case; only I shall suggest a few plain things, which fully satisfie my own mind in these Points; and may thro Gods Blessing, give the same satisfaction to those who are truly willing and prepared to receive it. To such I mean who thro the fault of their Education or Company, may be faln into these mistakes, but yet are not obstinately fixt in them, nor gone over into the way of Separation, but are of an humble, teachable Temper; will be glad to see their Error, and to revoke it; having so much regard to the Peace and Unity of the Church, that they are very desirous in all things to maintain Communion with us in the Publick Worship, so far as they are convinced they may lawfully do it. To fuch as thefe, I shall now apply my Discourse with all the clearness and mildness that I possibly can: my business is only to instruct and persivade, not to expose or willingly to exasperate any body for I always reckon that the raising of Mens Passions, is a very improper way for the rectifying of their Judgments. The two mast common Objections against receiving the Communion in our Parish-Churches, are (1.) On Account of the Gesture then used. (2.) Because we have, as they call it a Mixt Communion.

Object. 1: "Some are not willing to come to the Com"munion, because they are required to receive it
"kneeling. And this they judge unlawful, for such
"Reasons as these. (1.) Our Saviour has not com"manded it, nor did the Apostles, that we read, use
"it."

"it. (2.) It feems unsuitable to the Nature of this "Ordinance, which is an Holy Feast. (3.) It hath been abused by Papists in their Idolatrous Worship of the Host. (4.) They look upon the imposing of it as an injury to their Christian Liberty. To answer these in Order briesty.

(1.) As to the first Reason, That it was not commanded by our Blessed Saviour, nor used by his Appostles at the first Institution of this Sacrament.

Ans. (1.) Neither did our Saviour enjoyn any other Gesture , whether Standing or Sitting: by this Argument therefore neither would any of these be lawful. But here you will presently reply, That he and his Apostles used another posture, and their Example ought to determine us. Let us then take it for granted that they received it in the same Gesture, which they used at their Meals; this is commonly taken to be leaning along, and therefore if we will strictly follow their Example, we ought to use the same. If it be replied, That now fitting is our Table posture, and therefore may be most fitly used instead of leaning. Pray then bethink you well, if you reckon there is power e-nough in bare custom, so far to alter the Gesture, viz. from leaning to sitting, why may it not then as well change it to kneeling? Since, as it is our custom to sit at our common Tables, so is it the custom of our Church to kneel at this Holy Table. And what is much more, we have also the Authority of our Superiors both in Church and State obliging us bereto. If it be faid that kneeling is not so proper to come in the room of leaning. as fitting is, on Account of the Nature of this Ordinance, we shall speak to that presently by it self.

(2.) But suppose that our Saviour and his Apostles had sitten at the first Celebrating of this Ordinance, yet does not this oblige us to use the same Gesture, since a

bare Example, the of Christ and his Apostles, is not always a Rule for the guiding of our Practice, that therefore we must do thus and thus, meerly because they did so. Example without Precept, lays not any necessary Obligation upon us. Christs own Example certainly binds no farther then be designs it should do fo, and what reason have we to imagine that he designed it should bindus on this or that Instance, where he has never given us the least Intimation of any such Design. Mamy things we know there are in the life of Christ, which it is fo far from being our Duty, that it would be Pre-Sumption and Sin to offer at an Imitation of them; as in his Miraculous Works. Other things there are of a Civil Nature, in which to endeavour an Imitation of him, would be weakness and folly, as to cleath our felves in a feamles Coat, because he wore such a one, with other things of the like Nature. But to come nearer to our purpose, and to instance in the Circumfrances of Religious Worthip. Suppofe we had never read that our Saviour used any other posture in Prayer but flanding, would that think you make it unlawful for us to kneel in Prayer? No more then for ought I fee , does his fitting at his last Supper make it unlawful for us to receive it kneeling. Again, as to the other Sacrament, that of Baptisme, the the Apostles generally used dipping, yet you do not I suppose, think we are thereby obliged to use the same custom. And why should you condemn in one Instance, what you allow in another of the same nature? But to come to this Sacrament it felf: Are there not several other Circumflances which our Bleffed Saviour and his Apostles used at the first Institution of it, which you who make this Objection do not think your selves bound to observe? As particularly in respect of the time; it was at Evening, and is called a Support, and yet I bope you do not thin k

think it unlawful to receive it at Noon. And surely the Gesture in which is as much a Circumstance as the time when or the place where they received it. But if you answer, There may be a particular Reason given for their taking that time, viz. Because it was at the Paschal Supper, which used to be eaten in the Evening; even so for the very fame reason might this Sacrament at first be received in a Table-posture, because they were now at Supper, and so continued in the same posture; but this without all design to bind us to the same posture, any more than to the same time, for any thing we can find. For our Lord speaks not a word of it that we read in any of the Evangelists, nor yet St. Paul, when speaking of this Sacrament, he tells us, He delivered what he received of the Lord, I Cor 11. 23, &c. So that we have hence great reason to conclude, that whatever Gesture was used by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostses at the first Institution of this Sacrament, yet are we no way obliged to an imitation of the same, but either one or another may be used, as the custom of the Church or the prudence of our Rulers (hall direct.

Yea (Lastly,) and to this purpose may we much more reasonably plead the Example of our Blessed Saviour, since both he himself and his Apostles were wont commonly to comply with the innocent usages of the Jewish Church, even in matters pertaining to Religious Worship, for which yet there was no express command given in the Old Testament, as might easily be shewn in many Instances frequently urged by learned Men; who also observe that even the Holy Sacraments themselves which our Lord appointed, do bear a very near resemblance to some Rites and Customs that were much in use amongst the Jews, to shew how little he affected Innovation in such matters. And thus we know the

Apostle Paul argues in a case much of this Nature, 1 Cor. 11. 16. If any Man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the Churches of God. The custom of the Church will have a great Influence over a peaceable Temper.

But (2.) It may be urged, that sitting is most agreeable to this Ordinance, as it is a Feast, shewing that freedom we have in Communion with Christ, by whom we are entertained at this Holy Supper.

Ans. (1.) You find no such thing said in Holy Scripture; Why then should you argue at this rate? Is not this contrary to your own Profession at other times? And I might truly tell you that in the other Sacrament fou do not observe this your own Rule; for few or none that I know, except the Anabaptists, use dipping or plunging over the Head in Baptism; and yet we read in Scripture how this represents our being buried with Christ, and raised again to newness of life. And yet because this is not of the Essence of the Ordinance, you can follow the custom of the Church; and why then should you be more scrupulous in the present Case, where you have nothing like so good a pretence?

But (2.) Though this be a Feast, yet is it not a Common, but a Spiritual Feast, and therefore you cannot thence rationally argue that you must use the same Gesture that we do at our common Tables. Rather when we consider by whom we are here entertained, the greatest Reverence and Humility doth well be seem us in all our Carriage and Behaviour, which yet is no way inconsistent with the most near and intimate Communion with our God and Saviour, in the exercise of our Graces and receiving an abundant encrease of them.

As, Consider especially what Transactions there are betwirt pions Souls and their Redeemer at this Holy Feast, and you will acknowledg that kneeling is a Gefute

fure no way unsuitable thereto. Here we do folemnly oblige our selves to be Christs Disciples , and here he feals to us the Pardon of our Sins, and gives as Title to Eternal Glory. And is it any way unsuitable for a Subject to kneel, whilf he is taking the Oath of Alegiance before bis Prince ? Or when his Prince bestows on him a Pardon, or a Patent for some great Honour, is it unfit for bim to receive thefe kneeling? So that consider this Sacrament under these Nations, you see bow agreeable this Gesture is to the Nature and Design of it. To this let me only add, that even at the receiving of the Holy Elements from the hand of Christs Minister, we do joyn with him in that most Solemn Prayer, That the Body and Blood of Christ may preferve our Soul and Body unto Everlasting Life. And can any thing be more decent then to be upon our knees when we are thus offering up our Prayers to God?

(3.) It is urged that the Papists brought in this Custom, and do abuse it in their Idolatrous Worship of the Host, as they call it, and we by this means do seem to joyn with them, and confirm them in their

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Ans. (1.) This has never been yet proved, so far as I have seen, that the Papists first brought in kneeling at the Sacrament. For I think its undeniable from all the Records we have of the usage of the Primitive Christians in the purer Ages of the Church (long before Popery, and that most absurd Doctrine of it, Transubstantiation, was ever known in the World) that they used the same Gesture in receiving the Communion, which they did in other parts of Religious Worship, which generally was standing. And consequently afterwards, when kneeling came in use at their Prayers, then me st probably was kneeling at this Sacrament practised also. Not as I take it even among st them, do they intend

tend so much to express their Worship of the Censecrated Bread, by kneeling when they receive it, as by their Adving at the Elevation of it by the Priest; which

is I reckon immediately after the Confecration.

(2.) But let them do as they will, What does it concern us? Except we shall imagine that nothing which Papilts have abused may be lawfully used by others. even when tis separate from that abuse; which surely no man will be so unreasonable as to affert. If they have used to kneel in Idolatrous Worship, may not we therefore kneel in the Worship of the true God? If it be said. That we confirm them in their Error. This also is said without reason. Since the Judgment of our Church is sufficiently known in this point; and in the Rubrick after the Communion it is most exprestly declared, "That the reason of our kneeling is to signi-"nifie our humble and grateful acknowledgment of "the benefits given by Christ to all worthy Receivers. "but not any way intended as an Adoration of the "Sacramental Bread and Wine, which were Idola-"try to be abhorred of all Fatthful Christians: with more to that purpose. And this I think may sufficiently vindicate our Church from being any way guilty of confirming the Papists in their gross mistakes in this matter, or in any the ill consequences of those mistakes, against all which she doth so plainly protest, might also further add that beside our selves, there are multitudes of Protestants as well as Papists, who receive the Sacrament kneeling, viz. all the Lutheran Churches, whilft its commonly faid that the Pope himfelf receives fitting.

(Lastly) It may be objected, That this is an abridgment of our Christian liberty, to be confined to one particular posture: Since Christ left it free, why should we be bound up to one more than another?

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The Apostle having bidden us to stand fast in the li-

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Ans. (1.) In Answer to this, pray consider, That supposing it was a fault in your Rulers, to confine you to one particular Gesture; yet does this no way make it unlawful for you to use that Gesture. Let us then take it for granted, which I think is hitherto evident, that kneeling is as lawful as standing or any other Gesture; if then it be so before it's commanded, I hope you are not so weak as to think that the command alters the Nature of it, and makes it unlawful, as being an encroachment upon your liberty; for by that reason you ought to do it if it was forbidden, that so you might maintain your laberty. And what confusion would this produce? Christ having left it free to use this Gesture or that, surely the command of my Superiors may very well determine my choice, without doing me the least injury. If you still urge that you must by no means betray your Christian liberty:

(2.) Consider, This is not a liberty wherein Christianity is at all concerned one way or other: Whether it be granted or denied, its no prejudice to Religion; which may either way be maintain'd very well. So that the Apostles Injunction reaches not to your Case. For he is speaking of that liberty from the Bondage of Jewish Ceremonies, which Christ had vouchsafed, but yet some Judaizing Christians opposed it, and zealoufly Preached up the necessity of observing them. to the great prejudice of the Gospel and the Corrupting of Religion: and this after the Apostles had expresly determined the contrary. But what's all this to our Rulers determining of Circumstances that relate to the Worship of God, whether as to Time, Place, Habit, Gesture, or the like? As in the present Case, when several Gestures are equally lawful, and our Rulers think

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it very Orderly and Decent that some one should be generally observed, and judge knecking to be at least as convenient as any other, and therefore enjoyn it to be used. What hart is it either to us, to Religion, or to our liberty, to be confined to the use of this Posture? Surely our rendring of Christian Obedience in such Cases, is no Encroachment upon our Christian Liberty. Nor is there any manner of consequence, that because we must oppose the corrupt Dootrines and Impositions of false Teachers, such that contradicted the Governors of the Church, therefore we may disobey the lawful commands of those who have Authority

ty over us.

Let it be well considered, That none do more abridge themselves of their Christian Liberty in this Case, than they who thro weakness or prejudice take up a conceit, that only this or that particular Geflure is lawful, and there confine themselves only to that, when neither God, nor their Superiors do so confine them. By such a false Judoment does a man lese his liberty, and not barely by being restrain'd, as to his external practice, whilft his fudgment is left free; as in the Case before us. My Superiors think fit to enjoyn kneeling, but without requiring me to declare that I think this Gesture necessary in it felf, and all others unlawful: in this they leave me to the freedom of my own judgment. And my judgment supposess, That both this, and standing and fitting are all lawful. Whereupon I can cheerfully submit to what is required; and also if I go into France, where standing is used, or into other Countries where another Gesture is used, I can readily comply with one or the other, and so do enjoy the benefit of my Christian Liberty. Whereas he who judges only one of these, suppose sitting to be lawful, does thereby re-It ain

restrain his own liberty, and makes that necessary which Christ never commanded; that unlawful which he never forbid; and so are more liable to that charge of adding to the Word, than our Rulers are, whilst for order sake, they single out one among st several indifferent things, and enjoyn the observance of it.

Object. 2. The next common Objection is against A mixt Communion, as some stile it. Many will not Communicate in wheir Parish Churches, because some are admitted there of such bad lives as they reckon will defile those who hold Com-

munion with them.

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Anf. (1.) I would defire such to consider that by the Rules of our Church , no persons either grofty ignorant, or of scandalous lives, ought to be admitted to the Holy Communion. None should come till they are Confirmed or are fit for Confirmation of which their own Minister is to be Judge. And those whom he knows to be neveriously vicious, he is to warnsbem by no means to presume to come , till by their Repentance and Amendment of Life, they have given satufaction to the Congregation; as may be seen in the Rubrick before the Communion. Such as thefe, the Minister and Church Wardens, if they know them, are obliged to present, that they may be proceeded against according to the Canons. And in the Exportation before the Communion, the Minister does most solemnly warn all wicked Livers not to come to the Lords Table, except they Repent of their Sins, and forfake them, showing how great the danger is of unworthy receiving; and those whom he knows to live in Malice, he is directed by the Rubrick, by no means to suffer them to some, till they are reneiled, if they are both obstinate. Whereby you 60 may

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may perceive what eare the Church has taken in this particular. And the through the fault of particular persons, there may be a neglect of D scipline, yet I am apt to think that they who for this Reason do with-draw from the Church of England, will scarce find any Church in the Christian World, with which they can more comfortably hold Communion, on ac-

count of the holiness of its Members.

(2.) Tho I would not plead for any sinful Remissa ness, yet it cannot be expected, that in our own, or any other Nation, where Christianity is the Religion of the Countrey, there can be the fame strict Discipline kept up, that was in the Primitive Times imben their number was much lefs, and when few, but fincerely good Men would profes Christianity, considering to what Perfecutions that very Profession did oft times expese them. The Cufe now must needs be much different, when the Lans and Custom of the Country, oblige all Mon to this Profession, which therefore they will readily make, but will not fo readily be brought to lead such an body and good life; as is agreeable thereto. And after the greatest care and frittness, there will be Tares growing up with the Wheat. In a great House there will be Vessels of Dishonour; as well as Honour. dealer of exceptions and a month

(3.) Suppose there are some unworthy Communicants admitted to the Lords Table, what hart can this be to those who are duly prepared to come thither? No more for ought I can discern, than it will binder my relishing or digesting my Bodily Food, that there is one sits by me, who has a weak Stomach and a bad Digestion. Nor do I know any good Reason why it should more defile or any way prejudice the, to receive the Communion with those who ate sinfit

unsit for it, than to joyn with them in Frayers, Hearing, or any other Religious Office. Whilst I partake not of other Mens Sins, surely I may joyn with

them in the performance of necessary Duties.

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But here is commonly alledged that of the Apostle; I Cor. 5. Tr. With fuch a one, no not to ear; Viz. not with an openly profune person. For Answer, This Text is by many good Expositor judged to forbid our familiarity with wicked Men in our common Conversation. That we should not make them our intimate Friends and Affociates; that fo we may both secure our selves from being infected, and may also bring them to shame, whose company we avoid; as the Jews of old did that of a Leper. And indeed there is much more danger of Infection by familiarity in daily Converse, than by joyning with them in Religious Duties. But should we grant that this Text enjoyns the removal of notoriously wicked persons from their Religious Assemblies, as some other Texts more plainly do, yet does it chiefly concern those who have power so to remove them; those in the Church, who have Authority for that purpose. But surely private Persons are only thereby obliged to do their duty intheir places, toward the removal of sach corrupt Members. And here I would define those who are most forward to make this Objection, to confider serionsly whether they haze done their Duty in this respect. Have you gone to these whom you know to be scandalous Livers, and with plainness and meekness admonished them of their Faults; and if they have proved obstinate, have you according to the method of the Gospel, taken with you some others to asfift you in this work? And if still your endeavours have been ineffectual, have you acquainted the Church, those especially with whom the Government

of it is intrusted, that they might proceed against fuch obstinate Offenders, according to their deferts?, If you have not done this, why do you accuse others for their neglett, whilft your selves are so guilty? why do you blame Ministers for receiving bad Men to the Communion, whilf they perhaps know nothing of their Crimes? For it is not enough (ure, for any Mans Condemnation, that he is in the general, faid to be anill liver, whilst there is no particular Crime laid to his charge, nor any body comes in to give information and proof of his Vicious Carriage. But if you ay you have done your duty, and yet the Offender is full continued in the Church : Surely then you may be satisfied that this will not be laid to your charge, fince you are no way guilty of it. And why should you fear to suffer for another mans sin which you do not promote? Or think you shall want the Bleffings premis'd to the worth, Communicant, bepersons admitted there. What appearance of Reafon is there, or what ground from Scripture, that upon this account you should either neglect your duty, or with-draw from your Fellow-Chri-Stians into any Separate Assembly? Pray take good beed, left whilf you feem afraid of the Company of fuch sinners, you your selves do not run into the Commission of agreat Sin: breaking the Peace of the Church, arviding the Members, and disobeying those who are set over you in the Lord, to admonish and guide you.

Lastly, I shall onely recommend one thing more to your Consideration. When you see one whom you look upon as a great Sinner at the Communion, how do you know but he is sincerely penetent, and simily resolved from this time forward, to forsake his Sins.

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and amend his life? For he hath been plainly warned by the Minister otherwise not to come there, and told that it is at his own great Peril if he come Impenitently. What the he hath often before been at the Communion , and soon after returned to his former Courses; yet how do we know but this may be the time wherein his Repentance is more deep and sincere, his purposes more firm and stedfast than ever? Certainly that private Christian who does frictly examine himself, looking well to the state of his own Soul, and entertains (uch Charitable hopes of his Brother, may, for all that I can fee, come freely to Eat of this Bread and Drink of this Cup; and does therein all much more agreeably to the Rules of the Gospel, than he that either whally neglects the Duty, or seperates from the publick Congregation, because some whom he judges unworthy, are tolerated And he that shall read impartially the Apostle Pauls Exbortation to the Corinthians, I Cor. II. will I think be of the same mind: where, tho he feverely taxes the great Diforders amongst them in their Administration of the Lords Supper, jet there is not the least intimation, that the private Members of that Church ought to separate from it on account of them.

And this I hope may suffice, in answer to the two main Objections which I chiefly intended to take

notice of.

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Ob. 3. Some perhaps there are, who may further Object against coming to the Communion, That we make use of the Common Prayer in the Administration of it, and they for their part are not fatisfied with the use of Forms.

Ans. I confess to me it seems very strange, that any who use to read the Holy Scriptures, and have, the

Objection as this. For Answer to which briefly, I shall desire them to consider, that in these Holy Scriptures, especially in the Old Testament, there are multitudes of Forms recorded. What else is the whole Book of Psalms (besides many others) which were used frequently by good Men of old in their Publick Worship of God. And, as I think is generally acknowledged on all hands this Worship was frequented, and many of these Forms often used by our blessed Saviour himself, and his holy Apostles. That our Saviour gave his Disciples a Form, commanding them to use it as a Prayer, as well as for a Plat-form, is ex-

presly declared in the Gospel.

And yet shall we think it unlawful for us to ne that fame Form, or another fram'd according to that Model? And some such Forms in the best and purest Ages of the Church, throughout the whole Christian World. down to this present Age, have been used by the most pious and holy Men, so far as History can inform us. At this day there is scarce any Church in all Christendom, but makes use of some Forms in their Publick Worship. Those learned and good Men, who were most instrumental in carrying on the Reformation in forrain Churches , have not only allow'd , but earnestly pleaded for such Forms, and accordingly more or less are they used in all Reformed Churches, especially in their Administration of Baptism and the Lords Supper. At least, there is not one of all those Churches that ever I heard of, which condemns the use of them as unlawful; no, nor I believe not any one Christian Writer for Fifteen bundred years and more after our Saviour. The fudgment and Practice of our first Reformers in this Kingdom, is sufficiently known: For by those Holy Men, Martyrs, and Confessors, was our Liturgy

Liturgy first composed. And it seems very strange; that many of those who profess so much honour for their Memory, should yet have no greater esteem for their Labours, no more regard to their Example; but are ready some of them to run away from that as Popish, in which those Holy Men judged our Reformation from Poperv chiefly to confist. Nay the old Non-conformists in Queen Elizabeth's, King James's days, and after, not only thought these our Prayers lawful, but some of the most eminent among st them, for Learning and Piety, such as Mr. Hildersham, Mr. Ball, Oc. have strongly pleaded for them, called upon the People to a constant reverent Attendance upon them, and wery smartly condemn'd those who have separated from them, as is to be seen in their Writings. Yea, the very same is at this day done by some of greatest note among st them; and in several of their Books there are Forms of Prayer composed for Families and private Persons, which Sufficiently shews their judgment. And some other of their Writers who seem most prejudiced against Forms, yet expresty tellus, they dare not say they are unlawful. Surely then be must have a Brow of Brass, that shall inthis case oppose his own single judgment in a manner to the whole Christian World past and present.

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It is I know commonly asked? Where are we commanded to Pray with a Form? To which it were Anfwer enough to demand, Where are we commanded to pray without a Form? So that by this Rule we should use no Prayers at all. If then you dare pray without a Form, tho you have no express command for so doing, why may you not as lawfully pray with a Form? E-specially when you have the command of your Rulers to oblige you thereto, whom God has commanded you in things lawful to obey. And that surely may be well esteemed lawful, which is no where forbidden, either by

directly or by any good consequence, not in one place in all the Bible; but more than that, our Saviour, as was before said, gave his Disciples a Form, and commanded them to use it (Luk. 11.2) which I think shews it to be our Duty still to use that Form, and does also very fairly prove the lawfulness at least of other Forms

agreeable thereto:

As to what is frequently urged, of Praying in, or by the Spirit, so far as that denotes our making use of that Assistance of the Spirit, which is common to Christians in all Ages, this may as well be done with a Form as without. For elfe a Man could not Pray by the Spirit, whilf he is using the Lords Prayer. But whilst we Pray for things agreeable to the Will of God revealed in his Word, and do pray with Humility, Fervency and Faith in the promises, and in the exercises of such like Graces of the Spirit, we do this while most certainly Pray by the Spirit, tho in the use of a Form: but so does not he who is destitute of these Graces, tho he be never fo ready at Praying without Book. Much more might be faid to this purpose, but I shall only urge farther the practice of those very persons, who make this Objection. Even you your selves, who speak against Forms in the VVorship of God, do your selves frequently use them. I doubt not but you often use the same Expressions in your Prayers, and so do the Ministers with whom you joyn, whose Prayer therefore so far is a Form; yea every Prayer you joyn with, is a Form as to you, and you are as much limited and confined by it, as by a Form. But that which I chiefly intend, is this, that you do commonly use Forms in the Worship of God, I mean whilft you fing Davids Pfalms, which you I am now Speaking to, I suppose frequently do. And I would fain know what manner of Reason can be given. Why it should not be as lawful to use a Form of Prayer

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as a Form of Praise, since in both we worship God? Yea many of these Psalms are indeed Prayers in the stricter sense, and he that uses them with Devotion, doth accordingly Address himself to God in the use of them. And where I beseech you, is the vnlawfulness of this? And if it be lawful thus to praise God, and pray to him with a Form, when put into Verse and Metre. why is it not as lawful to do it out of Verfe? If it be faid . These Pfalms are of Divine Authority ; yet certainly it must be granted, that as they are composed into Metre, there is a great deal of Humane Invention , and that none of the best in our Common Translation. But if it be enough to justifie the use of these Psalms, that they are agreeable to those of Divine Authority, the not just in the same words; why will. not this justifie theuse of those Prayers, which are as agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and often use the very same Expressions? Nay, I suppose you would not think it unlawful to fing pious Hymns composed by able Men, in which there was nothing contrary to Scripture, and for what manner of Reason can you then refuse to joyn in Prayers, against which there lies as little exception. But to conclude this, there are few of you I suppose, but upon occasion can joyn in some parts of Common Prayer, as metimes at the Barial. of your Friends, sometimes at the solemnizing of Matrimony, your own or others, and why then can you not with as good Conscience joyn in the other parts, particularly in this which is used at the Administring of the Holy Communion. Especially considering that this whole Office is generally lookt upon by the Nonconformists, fo far as I have read or heard, as little liable to exception, as any other in the whole Book. Nor do I well remember, that ever I heard any Objection against the matter of it.

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Obj. (4.) If yet any should Object, That they are distatisfied with the Ministers use of the Surplice in

his Administring of the Lords Supper.

Ans. (1.) In a few words, I defire such to consider what appearance of a fault it can be, for Ministers, as well as other Professions of Men, to use distinct Garments peculiar to their Profession, when they are employed in any parts of the Publick Worship and Service? Whilst they do this meerly for Decency sake: for to that end are they appointed in our Church, being only stiled Ornaments, without a word said of any holiness in them more than in our common Garments, no nor any thing that I know of about their significancy.

(2.) If this be granted that they may wear a peculiar Habit, then why not a Surplice as well as any other, the custom of the Church and the Commands of Authority baving introduced it? Where lies the fault of it? in the colour or the shape, or where? Why is not a white Garment as innocent and as lawful as a black one? What if Priests under the Law wore Linnen Garments, or what if Popish Priests wear them, what's that to us? Must we do nothing that they do, in matters of this nature? If they wear Woollen, must we therefore lay it aside? I wonder what Scripture or Reason

can be brought for fo abfur'd a fancy.

(3) But luftly, Suppose there was a fault in the Ministers wearing of the Surplice (for which truly the pretence is very slender) yet what's this to the People, who wear it not? Can you think that his fault in this case will be charged upon you? Yes you will say, You hereby give your consent and approbation. And why do you fancy so? It's not required of you as the condition of your Admittance to give your approbation. Nor does your coming hither it self do it. For we know the

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centrary, that you do not approve of it. And if you think it necessary for the discharge of your Consciences, you may go before hand, and tell your Minister as much, if that will satisfie you. It is here much what the same, as in offering your Children to Baptism, afterwhich you know they are to be signed with the sign of the Cross. Your desire is onely that they should have Christian Baptism, but as to the Cross, if there be any sin init (which I think is beyond the wit of Man to prove) let him bear the blame who is guilty. You are not concerned therein. Here you may, if you think sit, steely declare your judgment to the Minister, only give him leave after that, to act according to his judgment, and there will be no hurt done.

Object. 5. Some perhaps may fay (and it is the last Objection I intend to take notice of) That for themselves they are satisfied with the lawfulness of all that's required, and could be well content to come to the Communion, only they fear they shall give offence to some weaker Brethren, who have not attain'd this satisfaction, whereas the Scripture forbids

the giving offence to fuch.

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Ans. (1.) That Offence or Scandal which the Scripture especially sorbids, as is commonly acknowledged, is the doing any thing which may be an hurt to the Souls of our Brethren, any way drawing them into, or confirming them in sin, or discouraging them from their Duty. And this we are then chiefly warned against, when we may avoid it meerly by denying our selves in some things that are less to our own choice and liberty. But I see not how this reaches our present case, nor is it usually taken in this sense by those of the people who make this Objection.

grief to your Brother. Pray consider well sub se pleab 4

sure and satisfaction are you most to consult in this Case: I should think you ought first to look at the Peace of your own Conscience. For if you are satisfied with the lawfulness of what is required, how can you with a quier mind neglect the publick performance of this weighty duty which our bleffed Saviour hath fo expresty enjoyned, and by which you bonour him before the World, and do shew forth his death till he come? And will you neglect all this in compliance with the weakness and mistakes of any of your fellow Creatures? Beside this, do you not also disibey and displease both your Magistrates and Ministers, either by a total neglect of this Duty, or by doing it in private, in a way of Separation. And will you chife to grieve these who are your Brethren, and somewhat more your Superiors, by this your neglect, rather than displease some private persons, who indeed have no just cause of offence whilft you do but your duty.

(2.) Again, by this means you do indeed take the direct course to offend your Brethren in the Scripture sense, that is to burt their Souls: for you do bereby confirm those weak persons in their mistakes, and in the Separation which they of toccasion, and by your Example also tempt others to the same course, to stight and neglect the Publick Communion. Wherefore if you are once well fatisfied your felves, endeavour the same for your Friends. If you cannot do that, yet enjoy your own freedom, and be not in bondage to other peoples Errors. Walk according to the light of your own Mind, and be not missed by their ignorance. Look not upon it as a trivial matten; consider what a regreach and dishono r you cast upon our Publick Assemblies, whilft by your practice you declare them fo corrupt and vile as not to be joyned with : passing as it were an heavy sentence of Excommunication on the

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whole Congregation, yea on all others in the lan Remember they have no good Character in Holy Writ, who cry to their Brethren, Stand off, we are holier than you. What Sentence is past on the Pharifees on this account, the Gospel plainly acquaints us, whilf we there read how our Blessed Saviour shund not the Society of those poor Publicans in order to their good, whom the others despised; thereby at once giving us an Example both of Humility and Charity. Do not alledg that you think your felves bound to feek out for a purer Society and purer Administrations, whilft there is nothing finful required of you as the condition of your Communion in all Ordinances with our Church. And therefore certainly there is no inurity contracted by communicating withit. If this be not enough to satisfie a Mans Conscience, where [hall be rest? And the you may fancy that this, or that way of Worship, because of some external Modes and Circumstances for which you have a peculiar fondness. is more pure then what was in publick: Yet if upon such accounts as these you break the Peace of the Church, and with-draw from the Publick Assemblies, then surely the way you engage in will be found to be impure, because contrary to the Word of God. For where can you find in all that Word any precept on allowance given, that because of a Form of Prayer, Kneeling at the Communion, &c. you may Seperate from the Publick Worship, and from those Ministers whom the providence of God and a lawful Authority have fet over you, and chuse to your selves other Ministers, and with them erect private Assemblies in opposition to the publick? Surely there is no just cause for such a Separation, and consequently this may be justly stiled a Schism, an unlawful division and a great Breach of the Churches Peace, which is most

most strictly forbidden in Holy Scripture, and hath ftill been tookt on as a very bainous fin by Holy Men in all Ages; being commonly attended with a world of mischieveus Consequences, too many to be here so much as mention'd. That of the Apostle is very comprehenfive, where Envying and Strife is (the most natural effetts of Schism) there is confusion and every evil work; fam. 3. 16. And of this our own Experience in these days, will searce give us leave to doubt. Wherefore we ought to avoid the very appearance of so great an Evil. And sure it may the more restrain us from any inclinations to a Separation, if we consider what is commonly urged by Writers on this Subject, and I think is a very great Truth, that they who feparate from the Publick Worship of our Church, from Prayers and Sacraments, on such Accounts as are before-mentioned, they must by the same reason separate from all Chri-ftian Churches that have been from the Apostles time, down to our days: Yea, and from all the Reformed Churches that are now in the World. For both one and the other, have had either the very same things, or those which are of the same nature, and therefore as liable to exception. And should not a sober Man mightily suspect those Principles, which if they be strictly pursued and put in practice, would oblige him thus to feparate from the whole Christian Church, that is, and has been in all Ages. Yea, I think I may safely addfurther, that there is not any one party of what denomination soever of those who who separate from us, but they themselves have somewhat among It them in their way of Worthip as liable to Exception as those things which they scruple in ours. In several Instauces they will all 6: found to make use of their own prudence in determining some

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particular Circumstances, which are left undetermined in the Word of God, and for which they can Shew no express Precept. Why then should they condemn that in others which they allow in themselves? They have, I am fure no more command for Praying without a Form, than we for Praying with one (I think not so much) nor for sitting at the Communion, than we have for kneeling, with a multitude more Instances that might be given. So that for the same reason any of those call'd Presbyrerians separate from us, the Independants may separate from them, the Anabaptists from the Independants, and the Quakers from the Anabaptists, each pretending greater Purity than the other, and quarrelling with what they call Humane Inventions. And yet after all, I doubt not but the Quakers themselves, who would seem to strip Religion stark naked, of all that people ignorantly call Popish and Superstitious; jet even thefe have their own Forms and Ceremonies; year many of them, and that such silly ones, as have nothing of Reason no more than Scripture to be al-I dged for them. And this after they have pretended to such a Spiritual Dispensation, that they have thrown afide Baptism and the Lords Supper, as External Carnal things, tho most expressy commanded by our Bleffed Saviour; and to this extravagance have they run, whilft they are still for a more thorow Reformation and purer Administrations. All which may well oblige and perswade us to rest satisfied in our Communion with that Church where the Word and Sacraments are so purely Administred, that without submitting to any sinful conditions we may partake of them; and this priviledge thro Gods singular favour, we may enjoy in this our Church

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Church, if in any other in the whole World. How then can we justifie a Soparation from it? How carefully should we avoid the first beginnings of it, whatever has a tendency to it? But its time to leave

this Argument.

Onely before I conclude, tho I have already exceeded the due bounds of a Preface, let me take the freedom, earnestly to b seech you who are any way inclined or tempted to this Separation, scriously to consider and impartially to follow the things that make most for Peace, for the peace of Church and State, and for the peace of your own Consciences. In order thereto, calmly and soberly weigh the Arguments that have here or any other where been offered to you: and if your doubts still remain, address your selves to these who have care over your Souls for fuller satisfaction, and receive their Directions and Advice, without prejudice or partiality. And withal, yea above all your other end: avours, big of God, the Father of Lights, the God of Truth and Peace, that he would grant you the knowledg of the truth, and direct you by his Holy Spirit into the ways of Peace and Holines, which are agreeable to his own most bliff d will. And let these Prayers be put up with minds sincerely disposed to do the will of God, in all things so far as you know it; in singleness and simplicity of Heart, aiming wholly at the Glory of God, the Interest of Religion, the welfare and happiness of your ovn immortal Souls.

And be not, I beseech you, so weak as to imagine that God is so much pleased or honoured with this or that Mode and Way of Worship, as he is with Humility and Charity, with a peaceable and quiet Submission to the lawful commands of our Superiors. And in these does the purity and power of Religion

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much more confist than in any such external Eircumstances. By our contests about these things, it's most apparent that Religion receives infinite prejudice, especially considering with what unchristian heats they

are commonly managed.

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The Zeal which should be laid out upon the weightier matters of Law and Gospel, is too often unprofitably spent upon this Mint, Annise and Cummin : And yet on all sides , Men are too prone to flatter themselves with an opinion of their being very Devont and Religious, because of their zeal for, or against these things, whilst little of Piety and Holiness appears in their Life and Conversation. As if they had never read, That the Kingdom of God confifts not in Meats and Drinks, but in Righteoutness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, in the love of God and our Brethren, and in humble obedience to our Rulers, for Gods fake. Whilft we should be provoking one another to love and to good Works, we rather provide to Wrath and Hatred, by reviling, censuring, and back-biting. And thus the true Christian Spirit of Charity, with all the bleffed fruits of it, wherein the very life and. essence of Religion consists, is almost banisht out of the World. And bittle love to God himself, appears among st us, except our hatred of one another may pals for a sign of it: yet all this we are apt to Shelter under the bonourable name of zeal for Religion. This is oft made a Cloak, both for wicked Actions, and for unruly Passions. But such a bitter zeal it is, as St. James describes , James 3. 14, G. Which is accompained with Strife and Envy, and is Earthly, Senfual and Devilish. Whilft true Zeal is that which proceeds from Piety, is attended with Charity, and managed with Moderati-

on and Prudence. It neither refifts the Magistrate, nor hurts our Brethren, nor difquiets our own Minds, but like the Wisdom from above (there afterward described) is pure and peaceable, gentle and easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, It inclines us to love the good, and delight in them; to pity the bad and do all we can to mend them: thefe are the Fruits of it. But how rarely are thefe to be found in the World. Whillt Iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold, but in their Contentions they are over hot. And all this Strife and Division are we guilty of, whilst we all feem sensible of the danger we are in from a common Enemy. To whom we now expose our selves as a Scorn and Derision by our Vilifying and Reproaching of one another, and to whom we may become a very easie prey, by turning every man his hand against his Brother.

If we bite and devour one another, may we not fear to be consumed one of another; whilst our Adversaries behold the pleasant Spectacle, and soon may enjoy the Rich Fruits of our Fewds and Follies. This we all seem to apprehend, and thus we frequently complain, and yet how little is done by us to prevent our danger, and to remove the cause of

thefe complaints.

If it be said, What can private persons (for to such am I speaking) do to this purpose? Very much certainly, thro Gods Blessing, might we do: If all of us, in the first place, would enter into the serious consideration of our ways, humble our selves before God, for our own particular sins (instead of censuring and accusing of others) reform and amend our own Lives, and entirely devout our selves to the service of God and his Son Jesus,

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in such a course of Piery, Righteousness, Sobriety, and universal Goodness, as we stand obliged to by our Profession of Christianity, and by our Sacramental Vows both in Baptism, and at the Holy Communion. This is that Reformation toward which every man may do somewhat; which is so far from giving any disturbance to the publick Peace, that indeed it doth mightily conduce to our present settlement and security, as well as to our future eternal bappiness. For by this means Almighty God will be at peace with us, and will afford us his favour and protection. And if God be for us, what need we fear who is against us? How easily can be turn the hearts of our Enemies, or weaken their bands, and frustrate all their devices? Tea, by this means we should certainly become more generally inclinable to peace with one another. True Religion renders Men of a mild and peaceable, of a yielding and benign temper. It sweetens their Nature, and subdues their passions, and mortifies those lufts, from whence there come Wars and Fightings among ft them; such as Pride and Covetonsness, Riet and Luxury, Wrath and Malice, Cruelty and Revenge: for where thefe make a tumult and disorder in the Breasts of Men, they are not like to have peace with themselves, nor with their Neighbours. And what good would such a peace do, if it could be obtain'd, whilf we should still be at enmity with God? Nor is there much likelyhood that the Enemies of God should be any great Friends to Church or State. Very violent they may be for their carnal Interests, very bot and zealous for a Party or an Opinion, full of rage and fury against those that differ from them. but they are never like to be instruments of Peace, whilst they are not lovers of Holiness; how loudly losver

foever some of them may call for Reformation and others for Uniformity. And what a nauceous fullom thing is it to hear the Atheistical and Profane crying out for a Reformation of this and that in Church and State, whilst they will not be perswaded to Reform their own Lives, which a thousand times more concerns them? As if these Men bad any true zeal for Religion, whose lives are a perfett Defiance and Contradiction to it. Nor is it much better , I confes , to hear those Men vebemently urging Conformity to the Laws of the Church, who themselves live in no manner of Conformity to the Laws of Christ, the Head of the Church. As if a Man who is an open Rebel against his Prince, should be angry at another for not obeying. an inferior Magistrate. But would we all in the first place agree to be Pious and Holy, there would be much more hope of our Agreement in leffer: matters. For Holiness is the Centre wherein we must all unite, if ever an Union to any good purpose be effected among ft us. What would it profit us to be. alljoyn'd to one Church, and to be separate from Christ? Touse the same Prayers, and to have no true Devotion? To frequent the Same Sacraments, and not perform our Vows? Such an external shadow and appearance of Unity, without an inward Principle, will neither be very durable nor uleful. But when we become United in the love of God and true Goodness . then are we like to live in Unity and godly Love. When we are atted and governed by the same spirit of truth and holiness, then are we like to retain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace and in Righteousness of life. Then will our little differences either vanish of themselves or be more easily accommodated, orman aged with meekness and lowlings, with Christian Moderation

Ideration and mutual forbearance, Juch as becomes the Uticiples of the Blessed Jesus, who have all one Father, one Lord, one Spirit; one Faith, one Baptism, and live in hope of the

fame Eternal Glory.

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Thus in the first place giving up our selves unto God, bis faithful and obedient Servants, next let us see to render unto Cælar the things that are his; and shew that we Fear God by our Honouring of the King as Gods Vice-gerent. Let us then as Subjects of the same Prince, Inhabitants of the Same Kingdom, all whose interests are in the same bottom, let us all render to our Dread Soveraign that Homage and Obedience, that Honour and Reverence, to which we are most deeply engaged by all the bonds of Reason and Religion, by our Oaths and Vows, by the light of Nature and the express Laws of God in the Old Testament and the New. Let us remain well satisfied with our private Station, keep in our Sphere, have great regard to the publick Peace, study to be quiet and every Man do his own business. Let us carefully avoid all uncharitable Surmises and Suspicions, all bold and sawcy Censures and reproachful Reflections upon our Rulers and their proceedings, and do our utmost, to preserve all due Veneration and Honour for the Kings Person and Government; obeying his Laws, affectionately Praying for his Welfare and Happiness, and for the Peace of our Jerusalem, both of Church and State, joyning also our endeavours to our Prayers, that under him we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all Godlinels and Honesty.

To this end, Lastly, Let us all, as Members of the same Church, who profess the same Holy Christian Religion (and that as Reformed from the Innovations and Corruptions of Popery) laying aside all sinful Annimosities and Prejudices, and (to the utmost of our power) all our groundless doubts and and scruples, let us, I say, bumbly and affectionately joyn together in the solemn publick Worship and Service of God. Let us here receive the Sincere Milk of the Word, whether Read or Preached, that we may grow thereby. Let us here joyn in the same common Supplications and Prayers, which are made to God alone in the Name of Christ, for things agreeable to his Will, wherein we are all concerned and to which therefore, we may all most readily say Amen.

Would me thus mith one Mind, and one Mouth glorifie God whom we call Our Father; this furely would still putais in mind that we are Brethren, and so engagesus to live in brotherly love and kindness. All Society and Entercourse with each other, tho it be in matters of Trade and common Converse, does naturally tend to beget Friendliness and Good with; bow much more will Society and Conjunction in the duties of Religion and Holy Worship have that good Effect? But more especially Men do signifie and keep up mutual Friendship and Kindness in common Conversition, by their Eating and Drinking together. And therefore above all, let us fee duly to prepare our felves, and come together with great formardness and alacrity to this Holy Feast, the Supper of our Lord, which he hath graciously prepared for the Entertainment of his Followers. To this Feaft of Charity, let us come both to express and encrease our Charity to one another, as well as our love and thankfulness to our God and Saviour; this being one great end of its appointment, and which we are plainly taught by all that me here do, by what we fee and what we remember (as is more fully shewn in the Book it felf.) Here we are entertain'd at the same Table as Children of the, Same Family, and as we partake of the same Bread, so are we to become one Body and one Bread. Whilft we drink of the same Cup, we are to Drink into one Spirit, by which Spirit we were Baptized into one Body, as the Apostle Speaks, I Cor. 12. 13. But especially whilft we seriously confider what it is that we here commemorate, even an instance of the greatest Charity that ever was frewn to the World; surely this or nothing will fill us with B mils of Love and Charity to our Brethren. Behald we here the Son of God Jet before us Bleeding and Dying for vile Sinners, even for us that were Rebels and Enemies, that he might make us the Friends of the most high God, and fave us from the Wrath to come. Let us hear bim on the Crofs praying for his Murderers , Father forgive thein, they know not what they do. Yea, fee bim there shedding his pr cious Blood for those pretched Men, whose hands were imbrued in it. And hall not this great Example have a mighty Effect upon us? Have me received fuch kindness from our Mafter, and shall me not shew all we can to our Fellow-servants? Seeing also what we shew to them for his sake, he takes it as done

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done to himself. His Spirit is grieved, and his Wounds even bleed afresh, by the Divisions of his Members among ft themselves, and by their har huefs and uncharitableness one toward another: Shall we thus requite the Lord for his loving kindness? God forbid. Shall not that most precious Blood, which was shed to reconcile God and Man, reconcile us all one to another? Did Christ so love us all as to die to make us happy, and shall we have one another, and delight in each others Mifery? Was this blood of fo much value with God, as to appeals his Wrath. and render him willing to be at peace with us, and shall it not loften all our hearts, allay our passions, extinguish our unnatural beats, and enflame us with a warm and vigorous love to our God and Saviour, and to all mankind, especially to our Christian Brethren. Yea shall not the Death of Christ have this effest uponus, when we remember that he died not only as an Atonement but as an Example which we are all bound to imitate that as he laid down his life for us, so should we be ready to do the same for our Brethren ? Especially when he bath alfo told us, that Faith working by Love is the great condition of cur sharing in the benefits of his Death; that we shall never be forgiven except me forgive, nor shall be own'd as his Disciples, except we love one another. Let us remember that Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us, and let us keep this Feast not with the leavened Bread of Malice, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth; even with fincere and fervent love to God and Man. But its time to conclude. That the Death of Christ may be frequently and seriously remembred in this hol; manner, and to thefe bleffed ends at the Communion, is the defign of this Book. And that all good Christians may with full satisfaction of mind frequent the Communion in our publick Assemblies, is the design of this Preface. And that folid Piety and universal Charity, with Unity and Concord both in Religious Offices and in our whole Conversation. may be every where effectually promoted, is the earnest desire of the Author, and shall by Gods Grace be the bufiness of his life. Let the Reader heartily say that it shall be his also. And to all our honest Endeavours in our several places for the promating of Peace and Holines, may Almighty God give his Bleffing. for Choists fake. Amen.

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CHAP. I.

The Introduction, lamenting the Ignorant Vulgars contempt of their Salvation, and shewing the design of this Treatise.

He bleffed God, who in these last days hath spoken to us by his Son, and more fully and clearly reveal'd the way to Life and Immortality, which Christ hath brought to light, hath abundantly

manifested his infinite Wisdom and Goodness; in suiting and accomposating his commands and institutions, to the meanness of our Capacities; and, as a God who knows our frame, hath so fitted himself and the revelations of his Will, with a respect to our weakness, that nothing but affected ignorance, and meer willfulness, can keep out the understanding of what he hath taught us, or hinder the performing of what he commands us.

. The Doctrines of the Gospel, which are of necessity to be believed in order to Salvation, and upon which an holy life is built, are few and plain, which we may find fumm'd up in our Creed. As for the precepts which are given to be the rule of our life, how easie are they to be known and remembred, how exceeding reasonable in themselves, and most agreeable to our rectified Natures, and apparently tending to the unspeakable advantage of particular Persons, Families, Towns, and Common-wealths: the Gospel being delign'd, not only to bring men to glory and pleasure hereafter, but to better the World at present and to make this earth a kind of type and shadow of Heaven; and so it would be, if men were but more generally brought under the power and influence of the Christian Religion, which doth not only forbid those "I no Be and one on

fins which are destructive to the happiness of Societies and fingle persons, as the Laws and Religion of the Heathens might also do? but strikes at the very heart of wickedness, and gives the furest directions and best helps, for the utter removal of the cause and root of all diforders in the world, which it would be beside my purpose at present to speak of. None have cause now to complain, that they know not what to do to obtain eternal life, fince he that runs may read his Duty; To love God above all, and our neighbour as our felves, to do as we would be done unto to repent of all our fins, and betake our selves to the mercies of God through his Son Christ Jesus for a pardon; to be humble, holy, chast, and temperate; is any of this difficult to be understood? have we not a plain Word, directing us how to lead the whole course of our life? and have we not a Monitor within us, the Spirit of God by our Consciences in most cases, telling us how we should behave our selves? The fum of all is comprehended in our Baptismal Covenant, to renonnce the Devil and all bis works, the world. with its pomp and vanities, the flesh and the lusts thereof, and to be devoted to the Father, Son and Holy Ghoft. And as our Duty is easie to be known, so it is not difficult to be done, where there is first a willing mind; for indeed in this is comprehended all, to be unfeignedly willing to be such as God would have us, and to do all that he bids us. So that none can excuse himself for his disobedience, which is nothing else but obstinacy or groß negligence. And though of our felves we are poor weak Creatures, yet through the almighty grace that is offered to our affiiffance, we may be enabled to do all things needful for our happinels, and those weaknesses that cleave to us, which we allow not our selves in, but strive against and bewail, we are affured through the merits of our precious Saviour, shall never be laid And to our charge.

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And as the great truths and duties of our Religion are thus plain and easie, so the positive institutions, whereby I mean the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are few and clear; being neither burthenfome to be practifed, nor the meaning of them hard to be understood. Doth not that form of words, which Christ hath enjoyned to be used in Baptism, whereby we are folemnly received into the number of professed Christians, sufficiently shew the meaning of it? namely, that we are hereby confecrated and given up to the Father, Son and Holy Ghoft. And doth not our being Baptized with Water, very plainly hold forth our washing and cleansing from the stains and pollutions of defiled nature and from the guilt of fin, by the blood and Spirit of Christ? and who knows not, that the Lords Supper is for remembrance of Jesus Christ that died for us? The breaking of the Bread, and pouring forth of the Wine, how fitly and evidently do they represent to us, that his Body was broken, and his Blood shed for us? And the Elements of Bread and Wine, which we commonly use to nourth and refresh us, do naturally fignifie that strength and comfort which we receive from Chrift, as I shall hereafter shew at large.

Since then the Truths of our Religion are so evident, the Duties so reasonable and excellent, the Sacraments so easie, so sew, and so exceeding prostable, may it not well be expected, that all who profess themselves owners of that Religion which Jesus Christ hath taught and establisht, should be well acquainted with these weighty truths, diligent in the practice of their Duty to their Maker and Saviour, and to one another, and most devout and serious in the observation and use of these holy Sacraments, & constant in their attendance upon all Ordinances, as publick Prayer and Preaching, whereby they may be instructed & enabled to know &

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do the will ofhim that sent them into the World. But alas alass, to the dishonour of God and our profession. and to the grief of all that long after the advancement of true goodness in the World, by sad experience we find the quite contrary even in this our Nation, that we look no farther. God forbid that I should go about to disparage the glorious fruits of our reformation from Popilh Ignorance and Superstion; no, blessed and for ever praifed be our God, for that unspeakable mercy to this unworthy Land! for the happy effects whereof, doubtless thousands of Souls are praising him in Glory, and thousands more yet on Earth, have cause to be infinitely thankful for that clear light which vifited this corner of the Earth, when funk into little less than an Agyptian Darkness: fo that I verily believe there is no Nation under the Sun, where there are greater numbers of knowing hearty Christians, who walk agreeable to the Gospel-rule, such that would be owned and approved by Christ himself and his Apostles, were they now amongst us, and will be, at the day of their appearance before him. But having faid this to prevent exception and miltake, give me leave to refume my complaint, that still there are so many that are in Darknels in the midst of Light, and that walk as in darkness, not as Children of the Light. Notwithstanding the means of knowledge, multitudes remains in gross ignorance, and are unacquainted even with the great Foundation-Truths of the Gospel; and can it then be otherwise, but that they should be vicious, careless, and worldly? And many who have a fuperficial knowledge of their Dury, and confess its best to be careful in doing of it, yet are themselves wilful and gross neglecters of it, and live in open violation of God's holy Laws. Many there are that can talk religiously, and are ready in the Scriptures, that yet will not by any means be brought

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to forfake those fins, which they find God Word nevery where condemns, nor will they fet themselves to live fuch an holy ferious life, which is again and again fo expresly and earnestly urged upon them. As for the Sacraments, though most are careful to bring their Children to be baptized, yet I pray God it be not more -out of Custom than Conscience; for some of these can give no tollerable account of the reason of that Ordinance, hor why they would have their Children partake of it, only as they fee their Neighbours do, fo do they. But yet there are far fewer, who make any Confeience of informing their Children what a strict Covenant they are entred into, how they are related and folemnly engaged to God; for alass, can we expect Parents should teach their Children to walk as becomes those that are in Covenant with God, when they themofelves live rather like Rebels to his Majesty than faith-

And as for the Lord's Supper (which Lintend to make the subject of my following Discourse) how fadly is it neglected in many places; or elfe rusht upon incondiderately and carelelly, as if it was but a matter of course, and no such dangerous thing to receive it unworthily, as Scripture affures us that it is. How mamy hundreds, yea thousands, are there in both City and Country, who make no Conscience at all of coming to the Table of the Lord? perhaps they may come once a year, and fcarce that. Nay, many go from one year to another, and never appear there: as if they acknowoledg'd not they had a Saviour died for them, or as if he had not bid them thus to remember his Death, or as if his Death were not worth the remembring. Oh careless, stupid sinners, what have you got to take up your thoughts and minds, that Christ himself is thus forgotten by you? You can think well enough of your Chi.

Children and Friends, yea, of our Cows and Sheep . and your very Swine, and must Christ have no room in your thoughts or memory? Do these indeed deserve more love than he? Have they done more for won. than he hath done? or can they do more than he is able farther to do, and willing also, if your wretched obflinacy did not prevent him? I know you can fay many of you, that he deferves not to live, who can forget Christ, and that you do indeed remember him, and take him for your only Saviour; and will pretend that you have God always in your mind, when you are about your work, or upon the way, and you think we must take your word for't, because we know not your hearts, and cannot difprove you; butif one may judge by your carriage, you manifest nothing less. If one follow you from morning till night, he shall scarce hear one ferious word come out of your mouths; you found not half an hour in a day in Prayer, either with your Familes, or alone; plain enough we can hear you fwear and curse, and take Ged's Holy Name in vain, but scarce ever so much as once to mention him with reverence. Whatever company you light into, you are ftill talking fooliffily and vainly, or ele only of your worldly affairs, but nothing that concerns the Service of God, and the Salvation of your Souls. But for many of you, I need no other evidence against you, than your gross neglect of this Sacrament of the Lord's Suppey. If this paper fall into the hands of any fuch, (and I hope God will direct it into their hands, for it was for fuch that I did chiefly intendit.) If I fay, thou who art reading these lines, be guilty of neglecting this Ordinance of Christ from one year to another, when thou haft frequent opportunities and invitations to partake of it, let me ask thee how thou hast the face to say thou remembrest Jesus Christ, when thou wilt not do fuch

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fuch a small thing as he enjoyns thee to do in remembrance of him? never taking care to prepare thy felf and come to his holy Table. Canst thou remember him, and yet forget his command? and absent thy self from those who meet together to celebrate his remembrance, at any Ordinance appointed by Christ himself for that very purpose? Ah poor Creatures, that you did but well know your felves, and your own necessities, and concernments, then could you never be fo unmindful of Jesus Christ; you would as soon forget your daily bread. Oh did you well know what he hath done for you, and under what engagements you fland to him, you would fooner forget your dearest friend, who had fav'd you from Death, and daily fed you, and cloathed you, and kepr you alive; for indeed this, and much more than this, do you owe to the Redeemer of Mankind. Oh that you would but believe and confider, what glorious unspeakable treasures of love and goodness he hath purchas'd for, and will bestow upon you, if you will accept them upon his terms, and then you would no more forget him, then you would forget your Prince or Landlord, from whose bounty you were in daily expectation of a plentiful estate. And if you would but see to get your selves well informed of the nature of this holy Ordinance, diffinctly and clearly to apprehend the reason and use of it, and what priviledges and bleffings are contained in, represented and sealed by it; I dare fay you would more long to partake of it than of the most delicious Banquet, or sumptuous Feast that ever was prepared. But what do I talk of? who can perswade carnal, sensual, stupid Creatures, to be-lieve that there is any substance, any worth in those things that their senses cannot reach to? what care they for that which no way tends to the pampering and pleafing of their flesh? Give me leave, before I come to B 4

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what I principally design, a little to lay open the wretched carelesness of the generality of men, and briefly hint at the cause; that they may be ashamed of themselves when they see their picture and description, and so may seek out for the cure of their distempers.

Who would not, by the lives of most conjecture that they thought themselves sent into the world, on purpose to get food and raiment, and to make provision for the flesh; and that they had reason given them for nothing elfe, but to be more witty and politick in carrying on their worldly deligns? and how well would it be for them at the last, if those souls should have the greatest reward, which were most loving to the body, most solicitous for its welfare, and did toil most in its fervice: but what an heavy doom will light on them, if they must hereafter fare (as for certain they must (according as they imployed themselves in seeking their own proper happiness, in the pleasing and serving of the great God. Oh the strange folly and bruitishness of these men, who are so forward of themselves, to feek out after any thing which they believe makes for their temporal good; and yet will not by any means be drawn or driven to that, which is indeed for their fpirtual and eternal good, yea, and their temporal too, fo far as may confift with thefe, As if when they are contriving and working for the body, then only they were about their own bulines; but when they are mir d ng the matters of their fouls, they were imploy'd for fome body elfe, in works that will be of no use or advantage to them; when yet God himself hath told us, that in the matters of Religion, If we are wife, we are wife for our felves. But this comes to pass, by reason of that sottishness which inclines poor creatures to judge of all things by their sense, and to measure their goodness by their suitableness to the fleth. This makes the whole

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Gospel to be a meer riddle to them, and little more regarded than a strange story; for it treats of spiritual invisible things, wherein immortal Souls are concerned, and they forget that they have such fouls. To hear of spiritual food and raiment, to put on Christ, and to feed upon bim, all which we meet with in the word, are mysteries, of which they are willing to be ignorant. To be made glad with the highe of God's countenance, to have fellow hip with the Father and the Son, to be beautified, adorned, and enriched with graces and good works, and the like expressions, are fo dark and knotty that they know not what to make of them: they account nothing beauty but what they can look on : nor bravery, which makes They know no not a noise and shew in the world; Raiment they need, but what they wear on their backs, nor any food but that which they put into their bellies. That only do they account pleasure, which they feel in their throats, or which is fo grofs, that hor fes and dogs have a share in it as well as they; and no thing must pass for honour with them but having respect in the world; and that they count their chiefelt riches, which they put in their purfes, and lay up in their bags. And this same blindness and carnality, amongst all other mischiefs that it does, occasions the contempt of that facred appointment of Christ, the commemoration of his death, by partaking of his Supper: for here's nothing provided to give that entertainment to greedy raging Senfualists which they covet and hunt after. It is indeed very well worthy our observation, that so far as our Senses might be helpful to us in the service of God, he hath graciously condescended to use such means as might work upon and affect them, that thereby Faith it felf, our apprehenfion of those things which we see not, may be quickned and advanced: which, as in some other instances, 10

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to in this. Sacrament especially is made manifest : for here we have crucified Christ plainly held forth to us. and the benefits we receive by him, are fignified by those material things, Bread and Wine, which we eat and drink. And thus far God hath made provision for sense it self, the more to excite and stir up our dull spirits; but so far as the pleasing and humouring the Tenses might be an hinderance to the Soul, God hath made no provision for them. Here's no such pomp and gaudiness, and outward splendor, as may gratifie wanton carnal minds. Papifts may device fuch things (instead of Christ's institutions, which they steal away from the People) to the quenching of all true zeal and fpirital affection in God's service; but the Gospel warrants not any fuch hurtful devices, and our Church doth justly reject them. Nor is here a feast of dainties to fatisfie a luxurious appetite, or feed an hungry bel-Here's food for the Soul indeed represented and convey'd by thele Elements to the worthy receiver; but the most are so ignorant of their greatest concernments, that they never yet found fuch a thing within them as a spiritual hunger. What, a Soul be hungry? how can that be? Alass, they have so much to do to supply the necesfities of their Bodies, that they can't have while to regard their Souls. No they may fink or fwim, starve, and damn for them; for they have other matters to mind which they hold more necessary. It is not a wonder what we read Matth. 22. at the begining, that when the King had made a Marriage for his Son, and prepared a Feast, and sent forth his Servants to invite the Guelts, they should make light of it, and begin to frame excuses, that they had other business to do, and this and that way to go, and therefore could not come? What, not come to a Feast, to a sumptuous Marriage-feast? to a Feast made for the King's Son? And

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And when fervants were fent on purpofe to intrice them goit? were not thefe a strange fort of stubborn foolish men, that would disobey their own King, sending them flich a courteous melfage as this? Reader, doll thou not condemn them in thy own thoughts? dolt show not think thou would'it never have been to fully and oblinate as they, if thou hadit been forent unto? But for all thy thoughts, its well if then prove not guity of the very fame fault thy felf. For what was the matter sthink'ft thou, that these people would not come when they were invited? Why alas, there was no such Fare made ready as they had a mind to. Be fure had there been but such good chear as would have fill deheir bellies, they would have made hafte enough, abd would have invented excuses how to get in, rather than to key choods a party t appointed regular way. An away.

But this is a Parable, shewing what entertainment the most do give to the Gospel, whereby we are invited not only to a Wedding-Fealt, but to be oven married our felves to the Lord Jefus Christ, whe everlasting Son of the Father: and yet this mellage the matchless mercy whereof may aftonish Meniarid Angols, I fay this Meffage is flighted: Menuil not came to Christ that they may have life. Adulterous Souls 20 after other Lovers, and will not be espoused to the Lord of glory: they fee no form nor comline sim him auty they should defire him. They hear great commendations of him indeed, what an excellent glorious person heis, no less than the Son of God made man, whose love was fo great to Mankind, that he laid down his life for them, but in the mean time, What has be? What's to be got by him? what estates will he settle on them? what honours will he advance them to? what? why they shall through him have their fins pardoned and subdued, their hearts fanctified, and at length shall be receiv'd

received into everlasting Glory. - Nay, if this be all leav they have no mind to come on, but when their con that fent is defired they have fome excuse on other ready a ture hand; and either they will not come at all, or elf that not yet, or not fo thorowly and heartily as they are thof commanded, and in fuch a wilful refusal of Grace de by thousands persist and perish. And though I suppose the rem fore-mentioned Parable doth not directly and primary ther ly belong to the Lord's Supper, Yet it may by confe end quence be very well applyed thereton Since here is a asth Marriage-feast of the King's Son, there are the great blellings and mercies of the Gospel held forthand of fered, and all who come duly prepared, and fincerely difford to accept the fame, shall be affur d of them and bither do God's Ministers exhort all to come in the appointed regular way. And what's the effect of their Mellage? why the most make light of it. Hither to this holy Table are people call'd to give up themselves to God to testifie the truth of their forrow for find, and to renew their relolutions against it and to to receive a fealed Pardon, and a Title to life everlasting; but for their parts they have no fuch liking to thefe fpinite al good things which are fo freely tendered them. The truth is their fins as yet they are lotheto leave; for they fee no great hurt in them; may; they think the find much good at present, and do not use to trouble themselves much with the thoughts of that mischie they may hereafter dothem, and therefore they have no fuch high thoughts of Christ for his being able to mortifie and remove their lufts, and forto fave them from the milery these would bring them to! They can very hardly be perfwaded, that there is any fuch excellency in an holy life, that they should so speedily and folemnly refulve uponit. And though they can like well enough to go to Heaven when they must needs leave

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be all leave this World, yet they look aponthat day for far off. con that they are in no great halt of making fure their fudy a ture happines, but think it may be time enough to do r ell that a great while hence. And can any man wonder, if y an those who are no more sensible of any benefit they have ce de by Christ, are very flack and negligent in a thankful ethi remembrance of his death, and of those benefits which mari thereby we enjoy and hope for , which is the great onfe end of celebrating this Sacrament No marvel if fuch is a asthese always find one excuse or other, to keep away great from that which they have no more love to, and the d of necessity and advantage whereof, they are no moreacerely quainted with. If there was but any matter of gain to em be got by it, any thing which made for the field, we should need no such ado to get them thither. We may n the their be fure, if the King should but proclaim that he would thi give fix pence a-piece to all the poor throughout London, that would repair to White-hall, there would need esto nothing but the knowledg of it to get them together. O what running, and crowding, & craying would there be! He need not fend any Messengers to beseech and perswade them to receive his Charity. But when the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven and Earth by his Heralds proclaims to all, Ho every one that is willing, let bim prepare himself, and come hither and receive an earnest of infinite and everlasting treasures, there are few will accept the offer, as if it was of no value; and as if the Apostle was miltaken, when he prefers the blood of Christ before such corruptible things as Silver and Gold. Nay l'le warrant you, in those Parishes where you shall find so few at a Communion, did but any rich man amongst them make a Feast, and invite the whole Town toit, you shall find but few stay at home. But now when God himself calls them to his Table, and there hath provided them food which came from Heaven, true Spiritual

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ritual Marina, even the Body and Blood of Christ, which is meat and drink indeed, they find no great appetite to this Banquet: All the great words they hear of it work not with them: for in all fuch cafes 'tis not other mens words and opinions that we judg by, but our own relish and feeling. And whil'st men have got such corrupt dispositions, and carnal affections that they savour only those things which are gross and earthly like themselves; what wonder is it if they undervalue that which is so unfurtable to them, and in which they can feel no more taffe than in the White of an Egg. A Swine prefers his own swill before the greatest Dainties that can be provided; and a voluptuous finner that is wallowing in the mud of fleshly pleasures, would not willingly exchange conditions with the Glorious Angels; that always behold the Face of God.

Oh whither is the Soul of man degenerated! into what a low and fad estate is it faln, that it finds sweet ness in any thing rather than in that which is truly pleafant? How chearfully and contentedly can people fer themselves to any thing rather than to that only work which God hath appointed them, even the working out of their Salvation? From morning to night they can follow their worldly business without complaining, and yet know not how to spend one day in seven, nor one half hour in a day in the service of God, for the saving of their own Souls. Oh what pains do many poor men take, onely to get a livelihood in the world, and yet think everlasting life worth no regard or care at all They can be content to spend their thoughts, and frength, and time upon vanity, to lay out their money for that which is not Bread, and to labour for the wind; but when God faith; Give me your bearts, he is deni ed. If this careless generation had but Houses and Lands

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Lands, Money and Goods, proffered them on the fame terms that Heaven is, how greedily would they lay hold on them? If a rich than should say to them . Love but this Gold more than the Dirt under your feet, and you (hallbave it; Ohow quickly would they purchase it, and never think the condition hard! If the poor man was enjoyned to prefer Bread before a Stone, and to defire it more, and then it should be given him, do you think he would ever be without it? And yet when the Bleffed God offers them ten thousand times greater mercies upon fuch terms as thefe, they refuse them, as if they were required to do some great thing, for that which was not worth their Labour. What doth God command us, but to love himself more than empty creatures? To. value an everlafting Kingdom before the frail comforts of this short life? and yet we will not do it. He bids us but love our best part, even our Souls, more than these vile Bodies; and to take most care for that which deferves most, as being the more excellent. When he enjoyns us to fly from fin, and imbrace holines, it is as if he should fay, Beware of that which will do you the greatest mischief, and close with that which will do you the most good; Accept of Liberty and Freedom, and do not lie in Prison and Fetters : be in Health, and not in Sickness; and yet men will not be perswaded. When God faith, prefer my pleasant Service, before the Bondage of the Devil, and thou shalt be bappy for ever; he doth as it were fay, Be but heartily willing to accept of happiness here; and thou shalt have it hereafter; but the most are unwilling. And upon this it is that not only God, but all the world, yea, themselves, will for ever lay the blame of their destruction, bytheir resolvedness and wilfulness in the ways of sin, they are merciless murderers of their own Souls. The Devil may tempt, and the world may allure, but they can-

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not force them to fin. There is not one of all those, millions that perish, who can truly say, that he was unfeignedly willing to have fav'd himfelf, but could not. But as for those that perish from among Christians, they have least of all to plead in their own excuse. For they have been exhorted, and befought again and again, to put away their evil doings, to renounce their lufts and turn to the good ways of God, and yet they would not hearken. What though the Devil enticd them to wickedness, did not God's Spirit also move upon their hearts, to have drawn them to holines? But they who knew not how to resist the Devil as they were commanded, could refift and grieve, and offer despight to the Spirit of Grace. Whilft they knew not how to reject nor get away from a finful Companion, they could put off their Ministers and godly Friends with flat denials, if not with contempt and jeers. What though the flesh was craving for forbidden fruit, unlawful pleafures and fatisfaction? Yet did not Conscience contradict and check it? Why then should flesh, which had no reason for its desires, be hearkned to and obeyed. whilst Conscience, which is the voice of God, must be flighted and filenced? Tell me, whoever thou art, that, makest a Trade of sin, and livest in the neglect of thy Duty to God that made thee, and keeps thee alive, not accounting it the business of thy life to serve and honour him, but goes from one day to another without the serious thoughts of his glorious Majesty, and all his wonderful works and mercies; thou who feelt no need of hearing or reading God's Word, of constant Prayer, or receiving Sacraments, that puttest off the thoughts of Death and Judgment, and art careless of making preparations for the same : Tell me I beseech thee, what's the reason of such a wretched sinful course as this? Is it because thou knowest no better? Wast thou never

never told how thou oughtest to behave thy self? Did'st thou never hear who it is puts men upon sin, and what wages they have for it at length? Didst thou never read nor hear of a Saviour that came to call men to repentance and holiness, and laid down his life to save all that will be his faithful followers and Servants? It's very strange indeed if thou hast lived in any such dark corner, that thou wert never acquainted with these matters; but it is most likely thou hast heard them again and again, but all hath been to no purpose. What dost thou not know who made thee, and why thou wast made? There's sew Children but can answer such questions as these, and yet how sew men that consider

them, or that live as if they knew them !

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There are indeed many to be found, especially of the meaner fort, who tell you they cannot read, nor are Book-learned, and therefore they hope God will hold them excused and not require much of them, but yet these people have learning enough to look to their bufiness in the world; and if they be fick, they'll seek for help, or if they are wronged they'll look out for relief. And what have they not learning enough to know what they must do to be saved? have they been idle and unwilling to learn so much as to read plain English; and do they think this will serve their turn to plead for their ignorance and neglect of Duty, and wilful Rebellions aganst God? What were they taught or commanded fuch difficult things, that none but Scholars can understand or do them? They can tell, as simple as they are that the light of the Sun is greater than the light of a Candle; that Gold is better than Brass; that a King is above a Constable; that its better to have an estate of their own, which they shall enjoy as long as they live, than to be Tenants to another, to be turned out when he will. Do they know these things, and is it any harder

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to know that God who made all things, and put that goodness into them which they have, is better than all those things which he made, and therefore should be preferred before all Creatures? That he who is Lord of All, should be obeyed above All; that to be like him, is better than to be like the Beasts; that a certain everlafting Glory is more worth than short, uncertain comforts here below? Again, these men knew well enough how to eat and drink, and to take heed of what might hurt their bodies; they could avoid the persons. and places that were infected; if the house was on fire they would run out of it, and call neighbours to help to quench it; if they are upon the way, and are told of quick-fands and quagmires, they can avoid them. And yet have they not learning enough to do good to their Souls, and to take heed of that which will destroy them for ever, and hearken to others that warn them of their danger? They can be diligent enough to please those that do them good turns, and to beware of offending fuch as can undo them. And yet do they account it fuch an hard matter to love and please that God who hath given them all the mercies they ever enjoyed, and to take heed of provoking him to anger, who can kill both body and foul, and cast them into bell? Yea, further, let those very people that cannot read, have a Paper given them that tells them, how to cure any difease they are troubled with, they can go to a Neighbour, and get him to read it to them, and they can mark it so diligently as to follow its directions. Or if they be in any trouble about their Estates, they can carry their Deeds and Evidences to a Lawyer, and pray him to peruse them, and tell them how the case stands with them. And what, could they get no body to read the Bible or some good Book to them, that might direct them in the way to Salvation? Or could they not have hearken'd careat

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carefully to their Minister, whilst he was telling them what they must do ? or might they not have gone to him in private, and defired particular instructions for their fouls? Nay, there are few Families of the poorest, but one or other amongst them can read; and might they not have taken some spare time, and have read together, and discoursed one with another about the state of their Souls, and what was to be done in order to everlasting happines? The plain truth is, there are few but can shew diligence and skill enough in any worldly trifle, that they think does at all concern them; but (as I hinted before) they are so insensible of any advantage that's to be got by minding the things of Religion, that they difregard them as matters of no worth or consequence. For I cannot imagine whence this strange and damnable carelesness should come, but that first of all, men forget that they have fouls which will never die, but must live for ever in another world, ether in joy or torment, according as they behaved themselves in this: For certainly, the found belief, and frequent fober consideration of the true nature of the Soul, is the great foundation and support of seriousness in Religion, the great defign whereof is to help this immortal Soul to an happiness suited to its Nature. Wherefore, if the foul it felf be forgotten, how can it otherwise be but God will be forgotten also, and the Duty we owe to him neglected? For though if we were ingenuous, his mercies to our bodies might engage us to love and ferve him; and the most carnal men may so far remember God, as to look for health and wealth, and outward comforts from him, yet this cannot bring them to any heartiness in Religion, which consists very much in denying the flesh, and thinking meanly of all things here below; and therefore no man can serve God as he ought, but he who believes that he rewards his diligent Ser-

Servants with an everlasting Happiness in the fruition of himself: for nothing but the hopes of this can bear out men in those difficulties of suffering and obedience which they may be call'd to. But if men have no regard to their Souls, neither will they take any heed to please God, nor make it their business to get to Heaven hereafter, which is nothing else but a state of happiness principally prepared for a reasonable soul in the full enjoyment of God; neither will they take care to prevent their falling into Hell, which is that state of misery whereinto they that forget God are turned; and chiefly appointed for the punishment of the Soul. And hence it will unavoidably follow, that they will undervalue the work of redemption, and difregard the Lord Jesus, who wrought this work in behalf of the Sons of men, to recover their Souls to God, to purchase the pardon of fin, and enable them fincerely to please God, fo to prevent their damnation, and bring them to eternal glory. And if they have no esteem for Christ, then needs must they slight the Word and Sacraments whereby they should be brought to acquaintance with him, to be interested in, and related to him, and to receive the communications of grace from him.

Now though there are few that will acknowledge themselves guilty of such ignorance of themselves, such contempt of God and Glory, and of Christ, the way thereto, yet their actions do too plainly shew it. For certainly if they had any true knowledge of their own souls, they could not but take more pains to save them than they do, even out of love to themselves; when as now they never in all their lives, many of them, are so much as once brought seriously to ask the question, how they should do to be saved? No, nor ever withdrew themselves into private for an hours time on set purpose to consider what their spiritual condition is, and how they

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they stand related to God, whether as friends or enemies, and whither they must go when they depart out And tell me then, do these people indeed of this life. remember to any purpose that they have souls that must either be faved or damned for ever? What though they may sometimes hear Sermons, or read the Bible, yet do they use when they come home, or when they have laid aside their Books, soberly to think of what they have read or heard? Do they consider how it concerns them? Do they examine themselves by the Word, and apply it home to their own consciences, and guide their lives by it? Do they regard it as that by which they must shortly be judged? And though they may sometimes put up a Prayer to God, yet do they perform this duty as feeing any need of it, taking any delight in it, or as expecting any good from it? Do they before-hand think what they stand in need of, and so pray to God for a supply of their wants, not only of their Bodies, but Souls, in as good earnell as they can ask their neighbour for any thing they lack. And in the very act of praying have they any awe or fense of God upon their Spirits, as they would have, if they were putting up a Petition to a Prince or Judge? And do they mind what they have been about when they come from the Duty? Do they carefully wait for an answer of their Prayers, and patiently expect those blessings, which they defired from God, such as strength against sin, and grace to ferve him? And do they do what is in their power to procure what they pray for? Thus you may be fure it would be with them, if they were in good earnest in their Prayers. For when they go to any great man to request a favour from him, they attend what answer he makes, and their thoughts are much upon it, and they are deeply concerned for the success of their request. Though they have been baptized into the

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Name of Christ, yet do they ever use to think what they are thereby engaged to, and see to answer that Engagement? And suppose they do sometimes come to the communion, yet did they ever come to it with fuch a kind of Spiritual appetite and expectation of firength and benefit, as they go to an ordinary meal? Or are they careful before-hand to fit themselves for the Duty fo as to profit by it? Whatever they may pretend, it is most manifest that Religion is not taken by them, for the great work of their lives. They are far from spending their time, and busying their minds like men that were fent into the world on purpose to serve God, which they can say is the reason why God made them. It is not their chief study and work so to know and please their Maker, and to get their Peace made with him through the Lord Jefus. that they may live with him hereafter in Glory for ever. No, no, to the Consciences of these men I dare appeal, this is the least matter of a thousand with them, and there's scarce any thing which they less regard. They hear their Minister about these things, as it he was telling them a story of no concerment, or spoke in a strange Language, which they understood not. Was he but telling them the way to thrive in the world, and get store of riches, they would hear him more attentively, and remember better what he faid to them, and not think they had done enough when they had stood in the Church for an hour as now they do. He that hath made any tryal, may eafily fee that this fort of people do not give the same heed to one that discourseth to them about the matters of their Souls, as they do to him that speaks of earthly things. If you talk with a Citizen about his trade, or with a Country-man about his Corn, or Cattel, or the weather, or any the the like subjects, they can hold discourse with you well enough;

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enough; but if you come to speak of the unseen Kingdom, and the way thereto, what need we have to fearch into our Souls, to fee that we have got a good. found Title to that Glory. If you do but tell them of the shortness and uncertainty of life, exhorting them therefore to get well prepared for death and Judgment, how strange is such language as this to the ears of many? Some laugh at it as babbling, others give you a bare hearing, but are little affected with the weightiest matters delivered in the most piercing words that a man knows how to speak. Nay many times they'll be taken up with other things fo much, as not to mind or understand what is said to them, nor do they afterwards remember it; but are as much moved with the barking of a Dog, or blowing of the Wind, as with the most serious affectionate Exhortations you can give them. And indeed how can men take any great pleafure to hear of things that are not in their own Element, but as it were out of their reach? Would not the plain Countryman be ready to laugh and wonder at a Scholar that should talk to him in Latin, or make him tedious discourses of any point of Philosophy, though he spoke in plain English? What's all this to him? He understands it not, or if he did, he may think, what should he be the better for it. And does not the Word of God tell us that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, but they seem foolishness to him, because they are Spiritually discerned. The Doctrine of Regeneration by the Spirit, to those that never felt it, is still as strange as it was to Nicodemus. And except we have before-hand got some inward apprehension of the things that we hear of, all talk of them is but as an empty found, that fignifies nothing. Wherefore no marvel, if they who think so seldom, and understand so little of God, and Christ, and a work of Grace C 4 to

to be wrought on their hearts, are no more affected nor flirred when they hear of them. And whilst they perceive no profit they should get by these things, what should they hearken to them for? They cannot by all you fay, get one penny more in their purse, nor a meals meat, nor a fuit of cloaths; and these are the most desirable enjoyments they are acquainted with. And its no great wonder, when we consider the educaion of the common fort, if they be of fuch a wretched temper. For perhaps they were born and brought up by parents like themselves, that knew not how to acquaint them what they were made for, in any fuch manner as was likely to do them good; and it may be never fo much as fee them to School, to learn to read English; and in their childish years it cannot be thought they should have much understanding in Religion, when they think of little else but their meat and play; and when they grow up to riper years, they are fet to Trades, and to work for their livings: (I speak of the meaner fort,) and when they come to be fettled in the world, and have Wife and children, then they have enough to do to povide for their Families; and cannot spare time to learn the way to Heaven, and if they live to be aged, they think themselves too old to learn, and are too deep rooted in their ways to be drawn to forfake them without little less than a miracle, and so there are multitudes even within the found of the Gofpel, that live and die in lamentable ignorance and fenfelefness. I know all this while in every estate and time through which they pass, the most have opportunities for learning their duty, if they had any heart to it: but their minds are still possessed with some thing elfe.

And though they may be somewhat constant in keeping their Church, yet this being a thing they have always

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been wont to, before they knew what they did, they ffill hold on in a customary manner, without duly confidering what they come thither for; not thinking that the Minister speak to them, and about matters that are for life or death: the discourses also which they hear being upon particular subjects, they are like to profit the less by them, in that they have not such a found and clear knowledge of the chief points of Religion, as may enable them to understand and profit by Sermons. And though from Children they may some of them be able to repeat their Creed, and Commandements, and Lord's Prayer, yet truly it is very easie to say these over a thousand times without being much affected with them, or well understanding them, only pattering them over by rote: especially if they never had these principles clearly laid open and explained to them. It may be also many of these never had any particular close counsel given them, tending to awaken them to an apprehension of their condition, to convince them of their fin and mifery by nature, and put them upon fearthing in good earnest after the way to escape damnation, and be truly happy for ever. Or if they have been fo exhortted, yet they will not be brought to think of these things foundly by themselves, and to seek God by Prayer for direction and affiftance. It is no easie nor triling matter for a man wholly to change his thoughts, purposes, affections, and manner of life, as all must do that turn from fin to true godliness. Such a change as this is not likely to be wrought without much confideration, and fober fettled refolutions on man's part, to which the grace of God would not be wanting to make them effectual. I know it is also the grace of God that puts upon them, but yet it is Man himself that by the athiftance of this grace must thus Consider, and thus Refolve. But now when should people set upon this work

of confidering what they should do to be faved? Something or other still happens in the way that keeps them from the work, or takes them off before it comes to any good iffue. Either they are fleeping or working, eating or drinking, or playing and idling, dreffing or undressing, or have some whither to go, or some body to speak to, or in some company that they cannot leave: or have some business in their heads, which they are contriving, or else are in sickness that unfits them for action, or some trouble hath befaln them which puts their minds out of order, or some hapiness and prosperity which puffs them up with a foolish flashy joy; or they have some brave things in expectation which they are musing on, and pleasing themselves with before hand. Some fuch matters as these I dare say fill the heads and hearts of most from one years end to another throughout their whole lives. These and such like are the things that come into their minds as foon as they are awake, and then presently they are set about one thing or other, or light into some company that takes them up for that day, and the like happens too morrow and the next day; and whilit the present time never appears convenient for the folemn performance of this great work of Repentance, it is by the most posted off till it is too late, and then in vain do they repent to all Eternity that they did not repent in Time. Now it could not be that they fhould never have a spare day or hour for the confideration of, and fetting upon the work they were fent into the world for, but that they are guided in the course of their lives by this practical deep rooted opinion, That their only business here, is to make this life as comfortable as they can; and therefore that to get food, and raiment, and riches for themfelves and their children, to enjoy pleafures, and be well accounted of in the world, are the best things which can

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be imagined; whereupon they wholly bend themselves to the attainment of these things, and on they go in a giddy heedless manner, never well examining whether this their way be not their folly, nor taking much notice what the principles and opinions are, which have the greatest power upon their lives, and whence their actions flow; which principles may be so wrought into their natures, that they shall lead and rule them whilst they are fecret, and not diffinctly known and weighed. And indeed this conceit, that the good things of this life are most to be set by and sought after, hath its first rise from our corrupted natures, which being fall'n off from God and contrary to him, enclines us to feek happiness any where, rather than in returning to his love. And then in Childhood, and for some years after, we have very weak apprehensions of any thing but what's before us, being wholly rul'd by our fenses. And when our miserable mistakes have once taken root, and are become natural to us, its one of the hardest things in the world to be freed from them: for we are prone to be fo conceited of our own ways, that we are by no means willing to be contradicted, much less to call our selves fools for all we have done, and begin the world anew; as if we had never fet one step forward in the right way. And it must needs be the more difficult to convince men of the folly and basness of such a carnal worldly life, because they observe it to be the custom of the most about them, high and low, even of such as are counted wife and judicious, worshipful and honourable persons. And what, may they think, can they be so toully mistaken, who did but follow the course which they faw fuch men lead before them? And this indeed is one great cause of the mistakes and destruction of men, that when they come into the world, they chuse rather to follow the examples of their neighbours than

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the rules of right reason which they should gather from God's holy Word, and a due examination of things; and therefore they take to those actions, and that manner of life which they fee others follow, without well thinking whether they do wifely or not : just as if a man should see a company of people upon the way running as for their lives, pretending that they are in pursuit of fome great matters, and thereupon should presently set in with them, and run along as fast as they, without farther enquiry what they look for; till at length when they are all tired, he perceives they had no other delign but perhaps to catch flies, which when they have, they know not what to do with; or to lay hold on some pretty bird which they could not overtake : even thus when a man fees those about him running and riding, striving and sweating to get houses and lands, and all outward enjoyments, he thinks it needless to enquire whether these things be worthy all their labour; no, that's taken for granted: for fure, may he think, these men are no fools, but know well enough what they do, and therefore without deliberation upon the matter, he joyn with the rest in labouring and contriving for these worldly things, taking all the pleasure in them that they will possibly yield. And whatever help is afforded them for the carrying on of this design, they will readily and thankfully comply with. If you supply them with what they were feeking for, they will greedily receive it, or if you will give them fure directions how to get it, they will hearken to you, and diligently follow your advice, But whatever is presented, that no way conduceth to these their carnal ends, that which makes them no richer nor higher in the world, nor gives their fenses any delight, is like to be altogether flighted by them What mean thoughts therefore must they needs have of Sermons, Sacraments, and all Spiritual advantages

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which are only means for the getting of an happiness quite of another nature from that they are seeking after?

I hope this large Preface (which indeed I did not defign) will not be altogether useless, nor seem impertinent; fince they who fo little care for hearing or reading God's Word, for Prayer or receiving Sacraments. who are liftless to all duties, and feel no sweetness in them, all such may hence learn what is the root and ground of this distemper, what it is that makes them out of tafte with these rich and savoury provisions which all healthful Souts do so dearly love, even because their fecret, but most powerful, thoughts are, that they have nothing better than their Bodies to provide for; and that to do this is the chiefest business they have, and that nothing is of any great use which makes not for this end. But it would be quite otherwise with them, if they were indeed clearly convinced, and foundly perswaded that they have fords which will never die, and that these are the best part, and deserve most care, and are as much to be preferred before the Body as a Man before the Horse which he rides on; and that these their immortal Souls can only be made happy by the favour of God, out of which they are fallen by finning against him, and that the great work of this life is to get all breaches made up betwixt God and them, that fo when they leave this world, they may be restored to perfect happiness in the enjoyment of God; and that they can no way be thus reconciled to God but by Jesus Christ, by whose merits and meditation their fins may be pardoned, and by whose holy Spirit (which is given by the Father through him) they can only be so changed and fanctified, that they may be made meet for the inheritance of the Saints in the heavenly light of God's presence and love. Was the found belief of these plain, great, and commonly

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commonly acknowledged truths, but well rooted in the hearts of men, so as to over-power and change their affections, we should soon perceive them to be other kind of persons in all their behaviour, if they took it for the business of their lives to work out their Salvation, being convinced that they had nothing in the world to do but this, and what is in order to it, then would they diligently labour after a faving knowledge of a crucified Christ, which comprehends in it the whole of Religion. And then they would highly prize and diligently attend upon those means which Christ hath appointed for the manifesting himself, and conveying his saving benefits to the foul. They would take care to be found in those ways wherein Christ is like to be found. Whatever had relation to him would be very much esteemed by them; and they would never be at quiet till they had done their best to make it sure that they had got an interest in him, and through him a title to the Fathers everlasting love. They would then rightly inform themselves what's required of all that must be saved by Christ, and these conditions they would endeavour to come up to, and perform. They would be willing to enter into the most solemn Covenant with him, to take him for their Saviour in all his Offices, by him to be brought to that glory which God hath prepared for true Believers: and the keeping of this Covenant would be their study and care through the whole course of their life. Now though confidering these things it might appear a very fit method for the curing of mens miltakes, and direct them in the way to bleffedness, first to reprefent and demonstrate to them that they have immortal Souls; and that the love of God is their only portion, and that this can no way be obtained but by the Lord Jesus, and then to shew what is required to make us partakers of happiness by him; yet since these things

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things are in some fort known, and readily confest by the most, I shall at present wave this method, and chuse rather to drive at the last of these, which will be found to contain all; namely to direct and exhort them to enter into Covenant, and make a thorough closure. with Jefus Christ, that through him their fins may be fubdued and pardoned, their persons and natures reconcil'd to God, that they may be bleffed for ever in communion with him. And even this is my chief defign in laying down the following Directions to a due preparation for, and a right receiving of the Lord's Supper, and in giving Motives to the serious and frequent performance of that Duty, which I look upon principally, as a solemnising and rectifying our Covenant with God by Jesus Christ; and the sincerity of the beart in making this Covenant, and our faithfulness in keeping it, is the very heart and scope of Christianity. For my intention in treating of this Subject, is not meerly to perswade people to come to the Lord's Table(alass what a poor thing is that to be rested in!) but to instruct them for a right coming to, and hearty receiving of Christ himself, then to come to the Sacrament, there to make and renew their Covenant with him in a more formal and express manner, the more to affect, and deeplier to engage themselves. For this being a fensible and solemnthing, will be apt to make the stronger impression upon mens spirits, and perhaps they will be fooner perswaded to this work, because it is so much fitted to sense it self. But the great danger. is, least they should rush upon that which they understand not the reason of, and think they have done enough by bare receiving the Sacrament, without confidering to what purpose they do it; which would be great madness, and of worse consequence, than for a man to run and lay his hands upon the book, and kiss

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it, and use the like ceremonies of an Oath, and never mind what he swears to, nor afterwards think what he hath done, though it was about a matter of life and death. And therefore I shall endeavour by God's affistance to prevent this miscarriage, by shewing what is the nature and delign of this Ordinance, in a right participation whereof confets fo much of Religion: fince hereby a man professeth and engageth himself to be a fincere obedient Christian, which may be understood by this comparison before I come to speak to it more fully, that the more ignorant Reader may the fooner have the notion fixt on his mind. It is much what, as if the Governour of a City, after there had been a seditious infurrection of the Citizens, should offer pardon to all that would acknowledge their fault, beg his pardon, and return to their former subjection and peaceable behavior; and moreover should enjoyn all that were thus affected, to come take a piece of money which he would give abroad, or to partake of a feast which he would make on purpose for the entertainment of fuch; now would it not be madness, and gross impudence, and diffembling, for any to receive this money, or go fit at this Table, who were refolved yet to continue their rebellion, and would imploy that very money, and the strength they received from his meat, against him that gave them; when as hereby they were to testifie their resolutions to be faithful and obedient? Even thus hath it pleased the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of rebellious degenerate mankind, to proclaim free and full pardon to all that will heartily repent of, and turn from their wicked ways, and take him for their Lord and Saviour, and submit to his directions for their attainment of happiness; and withal he hath commanded all that will thus become his disciples, first to be listed under him by Baptism, whereby they

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are visibly entred amongst the number of professing Christians, and afterwards they who were baptized in infancy are to come to this Sacramental Feast, and there to joyn with their fellow believers, in a personal profession of their willingness and resolution to stand to that Covenant, whereinto they were engaged by Baptism, in restimony whereof, they eat the Bread, and drink the Wine, whereby the Body and Blood of Christ is represented, as I shall further shew anon. Now would it not in like manner, be a strange piece of folly and monstrous hypocrify, for any man to rest satisfied with his having been baptized, or his receiving the Lord's Supper, and think himself therefore a Christian good enough, without taking care to perform those promises which he then made, but rather encourage himself in fin by the consideration of what he hath done. as if he might the more fafely rebel against God, because he had expresly vowed against all such Rebellion? Could there be a more desperate, dangerous wickedness than to make such a wilful miltake? And yet I wish there be not thousands guilty of it. Alas, alas! how few that have taken the earnest-peny; and wear Christ's Colours; that ever think to any purpose what they are hereby bound to? How many in effect renounce their Baptilm by their ungodly lives : and either neglect the Lord's Supper, or come to it to pacifie their Consciences, that they may fin the more freely, rather than to frengthen and engage themselves against every sin? As for Baptism, I shall not insist on it, though I grant that this is the leading Sacrament appointed for the teftimony of our first being devoted to God; which engagement we ought to call to remembrance, and renew at the Lord's Supper, whereof according to my promife I now come to speak.

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CHAP

CHAP. II.

What it is to do this (to celebrate the Communion) in remembrance of Christ. And

I. That it includes the true knowledg of him.

D Eing desirous to contribute some affistance to D those that need it, to bring them (through God's bleffing) to a confcientious performance of this great Duty, I observe there are two sorts of persons faulty herein; either fuch as neglect it, or that miscarry and fail in the manner of doing it. Those that neglect it are either such that do it out of meer wilfulness, as the grofly vicious, that will not come to this Sacrament, because they think this would lay an obligation upon them to forfake those fins which they never intend to part with, whatever comes on't; and the stupid fenfeless ones, that know not the worthmor see the need of this Ordinance, or any other duties of Religion, who live as heathenishly, as if they had never heard of God and Christ, and another world, nor do they care to be instructed in these points, as if they were not at all concerned in them? or else they are such that abstain from it out of doubting and fear, not thinking themselves worthy, or not knowing whether they are worthy or not. Of this fort there are many good Christians, who too much indulge their own melancholly and dispondent apprehensions, and also many weaker, but, I hope honest well-meaning people, who seem to have a great esteem for this Sacrament, but having always heard what a dangerous thing it is to receive it unworthily. dare not venture upon it, not being well acquainted with the nature and reason of it, and being doubtful whether they are fit to come or not, being also, I fear, too

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too languid and heartless in deliring after it, or in making preparation for it, and for fuch as these principally do I intend my Directions. By those that are guilty of miscarriage in the doing of this duty, I mean such as rush upon it ignorantly and rashly, not well weighing what they do, and who, notwithstanding their acustomary attendance at the Lord's Table, continue their old finful Course of life. These also, I hope, may receive some benefit from the following Discourse, together with the most profane and ignorant; whilst I shall endeavour plainly to shew the intention of this Sacrament, and perswade them to attend thereupon in a regular manner. For fince, in behalf of those for whom especially I write this, my great business is to shew who it is that is worthy to partake of this Ordinance, and wherein this worthiness doth consist; the method I will take shall be this, namely, to shew for what purpose it was appointed by Jesus Christ, and thence to discover those Qualifications and Graces which are required in the Communicants, that they may receive it aright to those purposes for which it was appointed; and after I have done this, I shall lay down some arguments or motives to quicken all to come to, and celebrate it in this due manner, and then briefly direct those that intend to come.

As to the first, what was the reason and end why this Sacrament was appointed? I know not whence we should be better informed; than by looking back to the time of its first appointment, and to see what Christ tells us he did ordain it for; and this we may find expressly set down, Luke 22. 19. When he had broke the Bread, and distributed, he adds, This do in remembrance of me. And the same words he used also after the delivery of the Wine, as appears by the Apostle St. Paul's relation, who delivered unto them what he had received of

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the Lord, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. Whereafter the giving the Cup, is added, This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in red membrance of me; and so again, ver. 26. faith the Apo-Itle, As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this cup, ye do thew the Lord's death till be come, that is, you publish and represent it to the world, you acknowledge and commemorate it. So that by this it is plain, that the great end of this Sacrament, to which all others may be reduced, is, that by the celebrating thereof we may remember Fefus Christ, and especially that we may keep up the memory of that inestimable mercy to mankind, his dying for us; a mercy which should never be forgotten by those on earth, and shall never be forgotten by those in heaven. Now hence it follows, that they who are in a capacity and fitness rightly to remember Christ and his Death, are worthy to partake of this Sacrament which was fet apart for that pupole: wherefore without going any farther I shall shew what is necessarily required to, contained in, or immedately flows from this remembrance of Christ, that so we may the more distinctly appre hend what is required of us to make us worthy Receivers: And herein, I suppose, will be found comprized those feveral graces usually laid down for the due qualification of Communicants, as Knowledge, Repentance, Faith, New obedience, Brotherly Love and Thankfulness. And as I go along, I intreat thee, Reader, feriously to look in to thy own heart, and examine thy felf whether thou findest, in thee these qualifications or not; whether thou findest those graces wrought in thy heart, which may enable thee so to remember thy Redeemer, as may be acceptable to him, that so if thou findest thy selffuch a one as is described, thou maist give God the praise, and take to thy felf the comfort of lo great a mercy, and be encouraged to proceed in this and all other holy du ties, but if thou findest the contrary, that thou mail

with all speed and earnestness see to get thy heart changed, and thy wants supplied. And to this end (since I intend no other Application) I shall under every Head endeavour to help thee in thy enquiry into the state of thy soul, and in thy seeking after those Graces which thou maist be convinced thou art destitute of, and hast hitherto been content without them; and in this part I shall be larger, as taking it to be most necessary, though having so large a field before me, I shall labour

to confine my felf.

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1. First then, in order to a right remembrance of Jefus Christ, there is necessarily supposed a knowledge of him: for our memory contains only those persons or things which we before have known. How could he keep the Fifth of November, as a Thankigiving for our deliverance from the Popish Powder-Plot, who hath not some knowledge beforehand, that such a Plat there was laid by the Papifts, and that by divine providence we were delivered from it? No more can any man remember Christ as he ought at the Sacrament, except he knows who this Christ is in his Person and Natures. and what his Offices are, what he came into the world for, what he hath done, and will do for us. And indeed this right knowledg of Christ neccessarily requires and contains a knowledg of all the chief points of Religion, of which I hope thou art not ignorant who ownest the name of a Christian, It's a shame for thee if thou art, having fuch means and opportunities to inform thy felf, as thou enjoyest: having liberty to read thy Bible, plain Cate chifmes, and other good Books, and to hear God's Word publickly preach'd. Notwithstanding all which advantages, I doubt there are many to be found, who are very dark, even in the first principles of Christianity, as not accounting it any part of their business to trouble their heads with such matters. And that D 3 which

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which a man makes no great reckoning of, nor thinks himself much concerned in, though he may hear it an hundred times over, he'll fcarce have fo clear an infight into it, as he that hath heard it but once or twice with difigence and attention, applying his mind to it, as to a matter that is for his life. He that hears a Physician diresting him to a Medicine that will recover him from some disperate disease, is far likelier (if he have the use of his reason) to take notice of, and fix into his mind what's told him, than another that fits by, who holds himself nothing concerned in it. So surely if people thought it any great matter to fave their Souls for ever, they would foon fee to get acquainted with the way to Salvation, and not remain in such brutish ignorance as multitudes do. And for the help of fuch I shall run over those Heads of Religion, which more especially are required to enable us aright to remember Christ at this Commemoration-Feast, which he hath establish in his Church. Know then that God at first made man in an happy estate, even Adam and Eve our first Parents, who if they had continued happy, to should, 'is pobable, we their posterity have been too; but the condition of their continuing in that estate, being perfect obedience to all God's commands, they fell from it by breaking a particular Command, eating of the fruit of a certain Tree in the Garden of Eden, whereof God hath enjoyned them not to eat, even of the Tree of knowledg of good and evil, as you may read at large Gen. 3. Thus their hearts were turned off from God. and fixt upon the Creature, which was pleafing to their senses. Hereupon they became liable to the wrath of God, whe had before threatned, that in tha day they eat thereof they shall dye the death, which included in it all kind of mifery, whatever it should please God to inflict. They being thus become finners, they begat

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begat Children like themselves, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? And beside that corruption of nature which did cleave to their Children, the guilt of their fin might also in some fort most justly be imputed to them, they being as common persons, represented all mankind, who fell with them when they fell. But their Children, as they grew up, became guilty of actual fins in their own persons, to which their wicked natures did incline them, which did more expose them to the wrath of God. This condition was the world brought into by fin, become ignorant of God, prone to all wickedness; and deserved the greatest misery, even everlasting torment; and in this estate God might justly have left us, he might have given us up to our own bearts lufts, and so one by one as we came into the world, and rebell'd against him, might have destroy'd us for ever without any remedy. Yet he did not thus, but was pleafed out of his own infinite wisdom to provide for us a Saviour, when we had thus undone, but could not help our felves. And who was this Saviour, but his own eternal only begotten Son, very God of very God, who in fulness of time became man, and by the power of the Holy Ghost was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and Born of her without the least stain of fin, and was God and man in a wonderful manner united in one person. This was that Jesus Christ, of whom we read in the Gospel, who after he had some time preach'd his Gospel to the Fews, laid down his life as a Sacrifice to make fatisfaction for the fins of the world, and rofe again on the third day, and after forty dayes continuance on earth, he alcended into Heaven, and there is exalted to bron the fight hand of God in that humane hattwe which he affumed, and there he tives for ever to make intercession for us, that the benefits he hath purchas'd

chas'd may be given out to the Sons of men. And these benefits are such, that shew him to be a perfect Saviour every way fitted to our necessities. For by his undertaking this work of our Redemption, he did as it were reprieve the world, and kept us from being fuddenly deitroyed by divine justice, which otherwise would have laid hold on us, and did obtain for us that we should be tried once again for our lives, fo that our first Fall should not be our damnation, if we would accept of the way of Salvation which he had procured for, and revealed to us. Now fince our first happiness did confift in our being like to God, being righteous and holy and obedient to him, that it might appear that Christ consulted for his Fathers Honour, as well as our interest; the way to Salvation which he appointed was this, That we should love God above all, and count it out greatest happiness to be reconciled to him, that we thould humbly acknowledg and repent of all our fins, of nature and practice. whereby we had provoked his anger against us, and be sincerely willing to live in obedience to his Laws, and that we should own him the Lord Jefus as our only Redeemer, and depend upon him only for ability to perform thele conditions, and to obtain the pardon of fin and the favour of God upon performance of them. And then that we might have this ability, who by the fall were become weak and unable for good, but strongly bent to evil; Christ by his death obtained of the Father, that the holy Gooft the third Person of the Trinity, should be imployed to bring men to the performance of those conditions which Christ required of all whom he would fave; And accordingly the Holy Ghoft, in pursuance of this work, ord infpire the Apostles and their followers to write and preach the Gotpel, and fealed to the truth of it with miracles, for the conviction of all that should hear it.

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And in some places in all ages hath enabled men to make it known. And moreover this Holy Spirit doth accompany the Word to the hearts of the Hearers, and where he is received, doth enlighten the mind, and forten the heart, and heal, and change, and fanctifie the nature of man, and restores him to the image of his Maker, and begets in him a strong love to God, and a willingness to please him in all things, and brings him to an hearty forrow for, and an hatred of all his fins, and inclines and enables him to come to Christ, to believe in him, to love and highly to esteem him for this work of Redemption which he hath wrought, ascribing it wholly to his merit that he hath hopes of mercy from God, and any power to please him. And then for all those who by this assistance of the Spirit are made willing thus to come to Christ, and to God by him, for these Christ hath purchas'd, that their fins should be forgiven them, and greater measures of the Spirit bestowed on them; in a word, that they should have all things good for them here, and be received into everlasting glory hereafter. But all they who reject these offers of sanctification and falvation, shall die in their fins, and be everlastingly in torments with the Devil and his Angels. And this fame Jefus Christ will be the Judg of all men, and at the end of the world shall come with great glory and power, and raise up the bodies of all that were dead, and change those that are alive, and shall pronounce and cause to be executed the sentence of absolution and glorification upon the righteous, fentence of condemnation upon the wicked. This is that Jesus the Redeemer of the fal'n World, whose memory ought to be so precious to you. And these were the weighty causes, and the glorious effects of that death which you shew forth, and keep up the remembrance of it, in celebrating the Sacrament. I suppose it

needless to turn you to the particular Texts of Scripture proving these things, they being so common and well known; and the truth of them so plain, that they cannot well be doubted of by any that own the Chrstian Religion. And I hope they are neither fo many, nor fo difficult, that you should pretend you want time, or learning, or wit to get well acquainted with them. I dare fay you could learn other kind of matters then thefe, if you could get any worldly advantage by it. If Books were Printed that should teach you how to be rich and honourable, to live in ease and pleasure, to enjoy health, long life, and all kind of prosperity, you would pore fufficiently upon fuch Books, and beat your brains day and night, but you would get to understand and remember them. But if indeed you have so little regard to your fouls, that you will perish for lack of knowing those things which might easily be known, your damna, tion is just. And as for you that think the most fortish ignorance is excusable, because you are no Scholars and ver rake your felves for as good Christians as the best. let me tell you plainly, if you be without the knowledge of these principle heads of Religion, you are not fit to be so much as call'd Christians. Are you Disciples of Christ, that are so blockish and stupid, that you have not yet learnt the first Principles, which he teacheth his Scholars? Nay if you refuse to learn them, you thereby renounce Jesus Christ, to wit, as he is your Prophet and Teacher; which if you do, expect not Salvation from him. And, as without being acquainted with thefe fundamental Truths, you are able to perform no duty aright, fo especially not this of receiving the Lords Supper; for, Ifay, can he remember Christ ashe should that knows not who he is, what he has done for him, of what need he stands of him? And they who being in this wilful blindness, venture upon this Ordinance, mult -2000

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must needs do it to their own hurt, noming to it as a common meal, or meerly for custom or fashon sake; and so are guilty of the very same miscarriage which the Apostle represents as so dangerous, 1 Cor. 11. 29. They eat the Bread and drink the Wine, not discerning the Lord's Body, not having that knowledge of Christ who is there represented, whereby they might be enabled to give him that reverence and honour, which is required of all that are admitted to these mysteries.

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I need not fure frend time in examining the Reader whether he know these Truths before laid down, or not. If thou hast the use of thy reason, thou canst tell I hope. what it is thou knowest, and what thou do'lt not; wherefore take thy felf to task, and go over the feveral points of Religion, as I have before briefly mentioned them, if thou thinkest fit, and take account of thy own apprehension and understanding, and where thou findest thou art most wanting, be diligent to inform and fatisfie thy felf, and to this pupofe make conscience of hearing the word preach'd, and of reading the holy Scriptures in private. And get well acquainted with the grounds of Religion, as you may find them in Catechilms, or the plainest Books that treat of them. But think it not enough to be able to fay the bare words, to repeat your Creed without book or the like, but labour well to understand them, and fix them deeply upon your minds. as those things which are of greatest necessity to be known and remembred of any in the world. But yet barely to know and remember them, will not profit you. except you fo digest and improve them, that they move your affections and guide you in your convertation. It's a most lamentable mistake to think, that the meer saying of what you believe, and what you are to do, will fave your fouls: as if there was some strange force in the very words, which would make them useful to all that should

should patter them over: for by this means a Parrot might pass for a good Christian. If you had a Receipt given you, directing you how to cure the Tooth-ach, do you think it would take away the pain to get it without book, and fay it over by rote? would you not rather see to read it, and make use of the Medicine which it should appoint? even thus must you read God's Word, and good Books, to know what is your duty, that you may let with all your might to the doing of it. And indeed your knowledg is defective 'till it come thus to affect your heart: wherefore let that be the mark by which you may judge of its truth and fincerity, if it raise your affections, and leads you forth to action, 1 70h.2.3.4. For if you know that God hath in himself all fulnessand goodness,& know that you are needy and indigent, and can only receive supply and satisfaction from him, you cannot but desire atter him, and seek how to get a part in his love. If you know that you are in your selves lost undone Creatures, and that Jesus Christ, and he alone, is able and willing also to recover and fave you, you will then betake your felves to him, for healing and faving mercy. If you know that fin is your disease, bondage and dishonour, and holiness your glory, liberty, and health, you will readily comply with the Spirit of God to be freed from fin, and to be made as holy as your nature is capable. This then is true and faving knowledge, which must be in all that can affectionately remember Christ at the Communion. Of this knowledge Christ speaks, Joh. 17. 3. This is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and fefus Christ whom thou hast sont. And of this the Prophet speaks, Ifa. 53. 11. By his knowledg fall my righteous fervant justifie many, that is, he shall justifie those who have such a found and working knowledg of him as leads them to the performance of what he requires of them. For if men

men once come indeed to know that Christ is the Son of God, who earnestly desires their good, and enjoyns them nothing but what makes thereto, surely they will readily then hearken to and obey him. All this I add to knowledg, because it is very imperfect 'till it become thus fruitful; and will not vindicate those in whom it is,

from the imputation of ignorance.

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Now to get your knowledge to be thus powerful upon your hearts and lives, I cannot advise you to any more necessary course then these two, I. Humbly to beg of God to work the truth with power upon your fouls, that you may receive it in the love thereof. When you go to hear, or sit down to read, befeech God to accompany the Word by his mighty Spirit, that it may fink into your minds, and not become unprofitable; but that it may enlighten and awaken you, and reach to the very inward of your Souls, and give you such insight into your felves, and fuch a discovery of your duty, that you may vigorously be carried on to the performance of it. And then 2. You must often consider of those truths that you know; you must dwell upon them in your minds till you are moulded, changed and wrought upon by them. For want of this confideration chiefly it is, that fo many remain in ignorance; and that many others, who have some flight knowledg, are no more bettered by it: for you must meditate upon what you read or hear, that you may more clearly and distinctly understand it, which you cannot do, if words flip out of your thoughts affoon as they are out of your ears. And then, after the doctrines of the Gospel are well understood, you must tarther consider wherein they concern your partcular case, and what use you are to make of them; for otherwife how is it possible they should profit you? Though you have never so much Book-learning, and Brainknowledg, what are you the better for all, if you improve

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prove it not to your own good, by this ferious confidetation? Can you think ever to have a profitable faving knowledge of Christ if you use not seriously to think of him, what need you fland in of him, and what benefit he will be to you, and what must be done to make him yours? Can you get your fins mortified and pardoned, if you will not so much as bethink your felf what an evil thing fin is, and what your particular fins are? Can you be moved with the hopes of Glory, if you have it not in your thoughts? Can you escape your danger, if you forget it, and to are out of fear? If then you would ever have any profit by your knowledg, follow the Apostles advice to Timothy, 2 Tim. 2. 7. Consider what is faid to thee at any time, and that's the next way to obtain from the Lord understanding in all things; so likewife, I Tim. 4. 17. Meditate on thefethings, give thy felf wholly to them, that thy profiting may apppear to all. If you have not time to spare purposely for Meditation, yet take time as you are upon the way, or about any buffness which will permit you. And let this be the chief fubject of your thoughts, which I am fure deferves them most; even bow you should do to obtain salvation by Fefus Christ; and never leave following on this enquiry, till you be fully resolved, to set about what's required of you to that purpole.

As there must be this sound knowledge of Christ, and of the chief points of Christian Religion in all that can duly remember Christ at the Sacrament, so it will be readily granted, that this Jesus Christ must be believed to be indeed the Saviour of the World, as is declared in the Scriptures: and all that is there laid down of his Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, and coming again to Judgment, must be believed to be true. I will not make a distinct Head of this, because its necessarily supposed in the former, as I have explained

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explained it; for our knowledge of these truths is never like to be effectual with us, if we are not first of all perswaded that they are truths. And the Reader might be offended, if I should make any question, whether he believes the Christian Religion, and takes Scripture to be the Word of God, and acknowledges that Christ is the Son of God, and the promised Messiah, of whom the Prophets all along in the old Testament foretold. But though there are few who openly deny, or feem to doubt of these things, yet I fear there is a great defect, and too common even in this part of Faith, which confifts in an affent to the truth of the Gospel. For many there are who take little pains to fettle their belief upon fure foundations, which would bear a shaking, if any affault should be made; and can give little reason why they are of this Religion or Opinion rather than any other, except because this is that they learnt of their Parents, and is profest by their neighbours, and set up and countenanced by the Laws of the Land; and furely these are but weak arguments. But here let me add as before, that granting you do believe all that the Gospel reveals, yet this is not enough except your behef prevail with you to do what the Gospel requires in order to your Salvation. And this is indeed the furest way to get your Faith well strengthned and confirmed. even by yielding obedience to the truth, and trying by your own experience, what benefit comes by conformmg your selves to the will of God revealed in his Gospel, whether you can find the promises made to such obedient ones in any measure fulfilled to you; and when you have found this, you will fay with the Apostle, You are not asham'd of the Gospel of Christ, because you have begun to find it to be the power of Godto Salvation. Our Lord himself told us, Job. 7. 17. That if any man will do his will; he shall know of his dostrine, whether it be of God

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God or not. This is like a man's tasting of Honey, which will give him more affurance of its sweetness than all ar. guments could do; and this will make him confidently to affirm it, though the cunning off Sophister should endeavour by fuitable arguments to perswade him to the contrary; his experience will confute them all. This is the reason why great Wits and profound Scholars sometimes turn Atheists and Infidels, whilst the honest weak Christian, that hath relisht and well digested the truth of Religion, holds them fo firmly in his heart rather than brain, that he can die for that which he cannot so well dispute for. Thus far then I hope you see its manifest, that to your right remembrance of Christ, & so to make you worthy communicants, its necessary that you know who this Christ is, and what you have to do with him and to believe that he is indeed the Redeemer of mankind, and that all that Scripture speaks of him is true.

CHAP. III.

II. A right remembring of sin, the occasion of his death. Of Repentance, with considerations to work and promotest

T may as easily be understood, that if at the Sacrament you keep up a remembrance of Christ, and in an especial manner, shew forth his death' till he come, then you must needs remember what was the occasion of his dying, and that was the sins of the world. Had there been no sin, we had needed no Saviour. Had we continued in our first estate, we had needed no Restore. Now hence it will naturally follow, that no man can duly celebrate the Sacrament, whose eyes have not been opened to see the exceeding great evil that is in sin, and to be convinced of his own sins, so as to lament and hate, and resolve

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resolve against them. For is it possible for that man to remember Christ's Death as he ought, that sees no hurt in that which put him to death? Nay, that loves the very Nails and Spear that were thrust into his hands and feet, and fides, and intends to crucifie him afresh, when he is gone away? And all this doth he that never yet faw the odiousness of Sin, and that is not heartily set against it, but secretly retains and cherishes it. Can he rightly remember Christs death, who sees no great need he flood in of it, nor is fensible of any great advantage that comes to him by it, but rather thinks Christ might have kept his blood to himfelf, and it would be a difadvantage to him to attain the ends and benefits of his bloodshed? And fuch wretched blasphemous thoughts in effect hath he that fees not his fad effate by reason of Sin, and that thinks it would be to his loss to part with it. Wherefore fince it evidently appears that true Repentance is so absolutely necessary to qualifie and fit a man for this Ordinance, where it is to be renewed a and to which he must come with an humble broken heart, let me defire thee to put the question to thy own heart, whether thou know'ft by experience. what it is to repent of, and be truly humbled for Sin? And that thou may'ft the better know what I mean, let me ask thee, Didst thou ever yet seriously consider what thy condition is by nature, and by reason of thy careless finful life? And hast thou found thy self sensibly affected and stirred with this consideration, so that thou half been verily perswaded, that thon art in thy self a loft creature, and except there be a way for mercy, art like to periff for ever? And half thou been convinced that Smisthe cause of all this misery and danger which thou art liable to? And baff thou hereupon heartily griev'd for, and bewail'd thy wretched miserable state? Halt thou been humbled for the Sin thou broughtst into

the world with thee, and for all the fins which thou know it by thy felf, and canft remember thou haft at any time committed? Hast thou been careful to search in men, to thy heart, and to look back upon thy life past, that wight thou might'st find out what thy particular fins are, that good thou maist confess them before God, and forsake them; mon, t And hast thou indeed been so sensible of the evil of Sin lore el chiefly as it is rebellion against that God who made one to thee, and hath fent his Son to Redeem, and Spirit to San tee the Etifie thee, and hath daily given thee fo many mercies to by we dthe engage thee to please him? Hast thou, I say, seen so much A fwo vileness and baseness in thy dishonouring and provoickedr king fo good a God, that this confideration hath melted and broke thy heart, and wrought thee into a bitter thou pinest hatred and loathing of every known fin, so that thou half thou a earnestly desired to be delivered from it, which is so odious in its felf, and so mischievous to thee? And hast thy ntance. thou been therefore deliberately refolved, by the help of ood w God, without any more delay, to put away far from thee whatever is displeasing to God, and to return to him Now from whom thou hast falm and to an obedience to those Laws which thou hast violated and contemned? Examinethy felf faithfully, whether thou haft ever experimblin enced fuch a change of thy mind as this I have defcrif plac bed, which may well be call'd Repentance unto life. Or rather on the other hand, doft thou not find that thou art fuch a one still as ever thou wast; as earthly and carnat fo nal as ever, as hard-hearted and stupid, and as fond of onthy Sin as ever, and know'ft not what it means to have thy heart broken for thy offences committed against the great God of Heaven and Earth? Nay, it may be thou prid'it thy felf in being of the very fame mind and difposition that thou art now, over since thou canst reg to member. Thou art one that haft always lov'd God, and believed in Christ, and bore a good Conscience towards

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any limen, and then I fear all's little better than stark aught with thee: for though there may be multijudes that igood people in times of light, and having good eduction, that cannot distinctly tell, when they were in a ore especial manner wrought upon, and brought met o God; yetsew, if any, but can remember that eather were much worse than they are; even that exthey were much worse than they are; even that ever were too like the rest of the world, but now they adhey are washed and cleansed: Perhaps when thou worse these treedness, thou could'st cry, God forgive me, and the tree that a great sinner, but still goest on, and reshalf and as bad as thou wast. If this indeed be thy case, thou art yet a meer stranger to this worst of Christ upon they Soul, who is exalted in the first place to give relative, thou art at present very unfit to drink of that od which was shed for, and which seals the Remission

Now (that I may proceed in the method I promised, directing to the attainment of those graces which are string) in order to the breaking of thy hard heart, and imbling thy soul for Sin, I might advise thee in the place to look back into thy heart and life, to find thy particular sins, not being content in the genetic carbon the felf a sinner, as all men are; for this on the soul so likely much to work upon thee, but to fasten on thy most remarkable sins, and dwell upon and wail them, and so all lesser evils, and that body of death inch thou carriest about thee continually, which was so that thee. In this method partly may you are got the 5. verse. Further I might direct thee mestly to beg of God to open thy eyes, and with thee what thy estate is, and discover to the more of the evil of Sin, before thou feel its sad

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effects when repentance will come too late. Moneyer over thou art to use all other means appointed for thim working of a true and faving forrow for fin, as too forto ferve what God fpeaks against it in his Word, and best attend diligently to the most searthing and awaken inwa Preaching; and to be much employed in those confidenced rations that have a special tendency to the begetting this, this frame; and of this fort I might name several, more for instance to think frequently how great and gracinous a God sin is committed against, and what particular reasons thou hast to serve and please him, from the m by in cies and means thou enjoyeft; think how he stands those lated to thee as thy Creator, Preserver, and Ruler, God therefore disobedience to him is most odious, in the g dent, and undutiful. Withal it's good to consider hater much hurt Sin doth to the Soul, which is so excelle by th Being, how it defiles, debaseth, and disquiets it, h mon rings here on earth, and to everlasting torments handa after, and deprives men of those unspeakable is spitor which are to be had with and from God. But to a be strong tediousness, I shall pass over these and many the gazin considerations, and keeping to the Subject in hand, his ter rather direct thee to fetch matter for Humiliation that for Repentance from the Cross of Christ, the rem that p brance whereof at the Sacrament should still kee plaint, and renew thy Godly forrow. If then thou art one let me never yet lawest any great hurt in Sin, but for all the rea language which is given it, canst quietly and love ther in entertain it, let me beseech thee a while to fix matter thoughts upon a crucified Saviour, and then rem vous fi this wretched opinion if thou canst. Behold the & Blood God become man; a most innocent holy person, whole life was spent in doing good, who heal'd fes, cast out Divels, pitied all that were afflicted,

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he ignorant, pray'd and wept for poor sinners; after all, behold this bleffed Jefus, who had never in all his life been guilty of the least sin in thought, word, or deed, nor Moneyer gave just cause of offence to any man living, Behold for thim I fay, in the Garden a little before his crucifying, s to of forrowful even to the death, in fuch a bitter agony that and betweat as twere great drops or clots of Blood; & what aken inward pains and forrows dost thou think must those confid needs be, which put him into fuch an unnatural fweat as etting this, though his patience was as much greater than any eral, mortal mans, as his sufferings themselves were; for we d gra cannot imagine that he who so calmly bore all those in-article dignities and cruelies which were offered and inflicted hem by infolent men, should be less patient in regard of ands those sufferings which he underwent immediately from ler, God, but we may conclude that these were infinitely im the greater. Then after this beginning of forrows, and derli ther he had been most vilely abused and set at naught celle by the Rulers, the chief Priests, the Souldiers, and comit. I mon people; after he had in a jeer been cloathed in ndse spurple Robe, with a Crown of Thorns on his Head, at he and a Reed in his Hand; after he had been laught at , less spiton, whipt and buffeted, behold him brought forth to to be stretcht upon the Cross, where his enemies stood the gazing, shouting, and wagging their heads at him; whilft nd. his tender hands and feet are struck through with nails ion that fastned him to the wood, and in his Soul he felt rem that pain which wrung from him that doleful comkee plaint, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me? Now ne let me beg thee to dwell a while upon this Subject with It the reason and bowels of a man, and then tell me wheove ther in thy Conscience thou think'st it was for a small fix matter that the Lord of Glory underwent fuch griewas Christ so prodigal of his S Blood as to shed it for a trifle? or was God to cruel as to

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Dut his own dearly beloved Son to all this fmart, for inconsiderable thing? Certainly if thou art a Christia thou canst not harbour any such base thoughts, We then, what was it that put Christ to all this forrow, a shame and smart? Ab friend, it was thy sin and min and the rest of the worlds that was the cause, and can thou then imagine it an harmless thing? If thou dou of what I say, hear the plain Word of God, Ifa. 5 3,45 and the 6. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our forrew yet we did esteem bim stricken, mitten of God, and afflishe But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruile for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was up him, with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep bou thefe l gone aftray; we have turned every one to his own way, an et, he the Lord bath laid on bim the inequity of us all. I Pet. by the 21. Christ also suffered for 115, ver. 24. Who his owns bare our fins in his own body on the tree - Gal. 3. 11 nocen And at the institution of his Supper he acquaints all the that his Blood was shed for the remission of sins, Mat, 26.24 much When Man had rebell'd against his maker, and broke and st that Law which threatned destruction to him that should behel break it, there was no other way that we are told of but either he himself must undergo the punishmen and the he had deserved, or some one else on his behalf. An lake, t therefore Man being spared, there was found no was ved a for the satisfaction and honour of offended Justice, any but by thefe fufferings which the Lord Jesus our Surey from underwent: who being so glorious a person, even the within Son of God made man, he only being made a Sacriful effect for fin could condemn fin in the flesh, discovering to all the who world that fin was a most hainous evil, so hateful and verty displeasing to the blessed Majesty, that he would not that? forgive to any man his iniquity without satisfaction have made; and no other fatisfaction would be accept of yer I but the Death of Christ, who is become our propitiation, going

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for and hath made an attonement for us. And can there be weight to possibly imagined any argument of greater weight to possibly imagined any argument to detect and forsake and give min Can that which hath been found fo mischievous? and give me leave to improve this confideration in two or three doub particulars; that fo it may be the clearlier discerned, 4 and the force of it more felt.

TOW! 1. Methinks it may be great matter of humiliation ictel to us, to think that we should be so bainoufly guilty in deruise parting from God, and living in rebellion against him, that we could not by any means avoid his deferved wrath but by these bitter sufferings of the Lord Fesus, Certainly, Reader, hadit thou been present when Christ was so abused et. by the cruel Jews and their Rulers, it would have mov'd thee to compassion, if thou hadst only thought him innocent. But if moreover, thou had'ft known he endured all that for thy fake, would it not have affected thee much more? If thou had'ft feen him spit upon, mock'd and stricken with the palms of their hands, if thou had'st beheld the Blood running down when he was scourged, or heard his groanings in the Garden, or upon the Crofs, med and then had ft thought within thy felf, all this is for my And fake, this have I been the cause of, would it not have moway ved and melted thy heart? If thou should'st now see any of thy friends put to cruel tortures to free thee rey from them, would it not make thy heart even bleed the within thee? And why then may it not have the same rifice effect upon thee, to fet a dying Christ before thy eyes, the who as he became poor for our sakes, that we through his poand verty might be made rich, 2 Cor. 8. 9. So he was chastised not that we might have peace, received stripes that we might tion have healing; as in that forequoted 53. of Isaiah. But t of yer I remember what our bleffed Lord, when he was tion, going to suffer, said to the women that followed him and weeping, Luke. 23. 28 Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for

for me, but for your selves and your Children; so say I. poor Sinners, weep not for Christ out of a kind of piry to him, that he should unjustly (as to men) be put to so great fmart, but weep for your felves and your fins that were the cause. And this is that I chiefly intend under this Head, that seeing Christ hath bore such an heavy Load upon thy account, among the reft, thou mail hence learn the true nature and defert of fin, of thy own fins which thou art wont to make fo light of. Certainly the very torments of the damned do not more plainly discover the evil of sin, and Gods hatred of it, than the sufferings of Christ do. For it is evident, that the greatness of the punishment, where the Judge is know. ing and upright, is a plain Agument of the greatness of the offence; if you should see a man by the way hung up alive in Chains, you would foon concludes was for murther, or some the most horrid wickedness, that he was so dealt with. And as evident it is, that the worth and eminency of the person who is punisht speaks the offence proportionably of an higher nature. If we should hear that a King, who is both just and merciful, had caused his own Sons right hand to be cut off, we might well conclude there was some more than ordinary cause; but especially if he, being guiltless himself, had suffered this for another mans sake, we should reafonably infer, that it was a crime of the highest nature, for which was made so dear satisfaction. Now what must we think when we see the Lord Jesus upon the Cross, who though he felt pain and forrow only as he was in our nature, yet was that nature so nearly united to the Divine that it's faid, God purchased his Church with his own blood, Acts 20. 28. fo 1 Joh. 3. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down bis life for us, that is, Christ who was God as well as Man laid, mention no more, we find Phil. 2 To. The lit 6. 7, 8

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6, 7, 8, If then we consider one so far advanced above men, laid to low; one boly, barmlefs, undefiled, separate from Sinners, fuffering fuch grievous things, may we not in all reason conclude, that the sin which caused this was out of measure finful, for that's the worst word that can be given it; its nature being to odious that nothing can be faid of it sufficient to express its vileness. Good Reader then let me perswade thee to judge of fin by this evidence, and hever more to hearken to thy own Flesh, or to the subtle Tempier, or thy foolish Companions, that would make thee believe there's no fuch hurt in those fins that please thee, that thou need'ft not be so careful to avoid them, or so deeply humbled for them. That Devil who would perswade thee that it is such a matter of nothing to provoke God to anger. knows and feels the contrary in himself. So much hurt as there is in a Devil compared to an Angel, in Hell compared to Heaven, so much hurt he hath learnt there is in fin. Beware, left thou come to learn it by fuch fad expereience thy felf. But that I may finish this, let me once again ask thee, whether thou dar'ft fay that Christ underwent greater sufferings than he needeth to have done, in order to make fatisfaction for our fins, or that God laid on him more than in justice he ought. when he was become our Surety? If thou dar'st not affirm either of these, beware how thou mincest and lesfenest thy sins when thou should's repent of and bewail them: for by so doing thou dost in effect thus blaspheme God. Oh then let sin be call'd to the barr; indict it for a Murtherer, as well thou may fl. accuse it as guilty of the bloody death of the Lord of Life, shew all the Wounds and Stabs that it gave him; and fee that thou pronounce sentence against it, even utter death withoutany pity or remorfe; and heartily lament thy own baseness, in having so long given loving entertainment

to fuch a monttrous murtherer and traytor. And when ever thou find ft any favourable thoughts of fin arifing in thy breaft, call to mind what it did against Christ, and let that make thy heart rise against it; and even boil with an holy hatred and desire of revenge. And let the frequent remembrance of those streams of blood which thy fins fetcht from him, open thy eyes to shed streams of tears; or however work thy heart to an unseigned forrow for all thy iniquities, for which thy Saviour was thus wounded.

2. The next thing I would have thee to enlarge thy medications upon in the sufferings of Christ, in order to the bringing of thee to a kindly repentance, is that unspeakable love which is hereby manifested to the loft fons of men: when I speak of Repentance, I mean not meerly thy shedding of a few tears; but an inward change of thy mind, as I before shewed, that thou should'st turn from Sin to the love of God; and I know not what can be more likely to produce this, than to they thee the intollerable evil and mischief of Sin, that thou may ft turn from it, and the infinite goodness of God, that thou may'ft be drawn to him. Both these the Crofs of Christ most admirably holds forth; fo that well might the Apostle call Christ crucified, the wisdom of God, and the power of God, a Cor. 1. 23, 24. How it shews the evil of Sin to bring us to loath and leave it, I have already shewn, and shall do more in two following particulars. That which I would now fet thy thoughts upon, is, the inconceivable love of God in giving Christ for us, and of Christ in being willing to lay down his life, that as many as believe in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Consider seriously how the great God hath fent after thee a poor worm, the God whom thou had'ft finn'd against, makes thee offers of peace, the God who needs thee not, yet appears defirous

firous of thy happiness; when he might have poured out ever lasting wrath upon thee, he was willing to shew his compassion. And see what he had done in order to thy recovery. He hath sent his own Son, made of a surman, made under the Law, and delivered him to death for our offences, and accepted of the satisfaction he hath made on the behalf of all, that shall by him come to that God from whom they are faln: and by his death not only pardon of Sin, and deliverance from Hell; but a glorious Kingdom that shall never sade, is purchast for all true Believers. So that here,

1. Thou feelt plainly there is hope of pardon and acceptance upon thy hearty forrow for & resolutions against sin. And whom would not this encourage to come in freely acknowledging & protesting against their former backfliding and rebellions. If indeed thou wast palt hope. it were as good to keep thy fins whill thou may'it, and make thy best of them. But this is not yet thy case; and if it hereafter should be, thou may it thank thy own wilfulness. For Jefus Christ hath brought in a better hope: there is by him liberty proclaim'd to the captive, freedom to all that are bound, ease and rest to all that are burdened, a pardon to all that are penitent. And what? will not this make thee stir? Is a golden Scepter, held forth, and will not thou lay hold of the opportunity? Is God willing to put up all the affronts he hath received from thee, if thou wilt now come and fubmit thy felf, and will not this bring thee in? Is he ready to be reconciled, and art thou backward? what; dost thou rather hold off, because he doth so invite and importune thee to him? Because he is pleased with fo much earnestness and compassion to call thee off from fin to himself, dost thou the more securely run on in wickedness? Oh base ingratitude, and meer madness! Because there is hope of pardon discovered by

the Gospel, as procured by Christ, therefore even therefore, do wretched finners harden their hearts, and embolden themselves to continue at a distance from God, as if it was a matter of nothing to get their peace made with him, or as if he must of necessity pardon and save them, let them live as they lift. Thus vilely do they pervert the very delign of the Gospel. Whereas were they ingenuous and reasonable, they would acknowledge it to be a most forcible motive and engagement to cast away sin, to hear that there was hopes of having forgiveness and favour from God. If a company of Subjects should rebel against their Prince, what course would be more effectual in all probability to reclaim them, than to affure pardon to all that would throw down their Arms? But if they should be so base as to abuse the mercy of their Prince, and think, because he was fo compassionate, they might the safelier persist in their rebellion, it is but just they should be destroy'd, If thou love thy Soul, then beware how thou abusest the Grace of God. Wilt thou put away from thee the evil of thy doings, wash thee and make thee clean, and so with humility and fubmillion flye to God for mercy? if fo, this mercy through Christ shall be assuredly thine. But otherwise, know there is not a word of comfort for thee in the whole Gospel, nothing but what may strike For remember well, that the death thee with terror. of Christ gives all the encouragement in the World to Repentance, but not the least to Sin. Yea, it hath done more to deftroy fin, than all the terrours and threatnings of the Law. Well then, though thou art a loft finner, departed from God, once without hope, yet behold the God of heaven and earth takes pity on thee, he would not have thee utterly perish, though thou hast done so much to destroy thy self. He calls thee back to him, if thou wilt hearken and obey, and humble thy felf

self before him for thy departure from him, and for all the dishonour done to his holy Name, and wilt now at length devote thy self to his fear, thou need'st not doubt of his favour. So then here's hopes of mercy that

may encourage all that hear it to Repentance.

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2. And in the next place there is jo much love and roodness manifested in that way whereby this mercy is procured and tendered, that may ferve to work upon the hearts of all but flat Infidels, or brutish sinners that will not be brought fo much as once to confider of it, or seriously regard it. Here is love that passeth the full comprehension of Men or Angels. Here are mysteries and unfearchable treasures of goodness. Wherein could God commend his love more to the faln World, than in giving his Son to die for us when we were without help? And what greater love can be shewn, than that which Christ hath manifested in laying down his life for his friends? nay for enemies, that they might be made friends; for the ungodly that he might reconcile them to God. Vile wretches that we are, no more to be affected with this amazing discovery of divine bounty. It's true indeed, there are many things we are yet ignorant of, which makes this love the less apprehended in its due dimensions. Did we know more the infinite Majesty of God, and our meanness compared to him. and how provoking a thing Sin is, and how contrary to his nature; did we know more what strange condescenfion there was in God's manifesting himself in flesh, what bitter things our bleffed Saviour endured for our fakes; did we know the greatness of that misery he hath faved Believers from, and of the glory he hath prepar'd for them? did we clearly know these and all other heightning circumstances, our admiration and aftonishment would be unexpressible, as it will be when they are more fully reveal'd to us. But though at present we

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are much in the dark, yet so much of them we know, thar would we duly ponder them, we should even amazed cry out, Ob the depth of the riches of the wisdom and goodnessinf God! And what? will not this prevail with thee, oh back-sliding finner, to deal ingenuously and dutifully with that God, who hath revealed such abundant mercies to win thee to himfelf? when thou hadit and one thy felf, and the Law, which thou hadft broke, had past his sentence upon thee, when thou mightest justly have expected the execution, behold, without thy feeking, a gracious reprieve. And more than fo, when thou might it have had a pursuivant speedily dispatcht to hurry thee to deferved torment, behold a Saviour interpoling to prevent thy ruin. Instead of an unchangeable doom, behold an Act of Oblivion, affuring pardon upon cafe conditions. Do but deliberately weigh thefe things with that feriousness which becomes a man, and fee if there be nothing in them that may perfwade thee to a found repentance for fin, and a speedy return to the God of love. What doft thou think, if thou wast a mean Tenant, and hadst wilfully, in some discontented fit, pluckt down the House thou liv'it in,& fo walt in danger to lie in the open fields, and to be feverely punishe as thou hadft deferved; what now if after all this, thy Landlord, pitying the mifery thou hadft brought thy felf to, should courteously come to thee. and offer to build up thy House again in a more sumptuous manner then ever, and fet it at a lower Rent, only requiring thee to confess thy former folly, and promife to be fo guilty no more, but to live in this thy newbuilt House, and do thy best to keep it in repair, and to accept of his help for what thou could'it not do thy felf; and suppose he should even impoverish his own Children through his courtefie to thee, what dost thou think thou should'it now do in this case? is it any hard matter

matter to determine? would'it thou not think he deferred to be taken for a mad-man that should stand justifying his former offence, and would not thankfully acrept these courteous offers? I dare fay, Reader, if this was thy case, thou art not so foolish or stubborn, but thou would dit quickly refolve what to do, and this mercy and bounty of thy Landlord would even win thy heart for ever, and thou would'it think thou could'it never be fufficiently thankful for his kindness, nor do enough to make him amends. And would indeed the gentleness and liberality of a man, thy fellow-creature, thus affect thee, and shall not the loving-kindness of God, which hath appeared in Jesus Christ, have much more power upon thee? Dost thou not believe that our God hath done as much to engage his creatures to himfelf as this comes to? Hath not he shewn as much pity and tenderness to the fouls of men, as that would be to the body? If thou doubt, look back upon the state of man, and confider Gods gracious dealings with him. Did not he by his own folly and disobedience cast himself out of Paradife, and by wilful fin deface, and even destroy the workmanship of God? And yet did not God take pity on us in our blood, when we were cast forth to the loathing of our persons? Did not he contrive the way for our reconciliation to himself, and beseech us to accept of it? And do we not read, that in order to our emiching, the Son of God did as it were impowerish himself, and that we might be fill'd with the fulness of God, emptied bimself, and became of no reputation. And what an heart must that Prodigal Son have, who will not be affected with the kindness of his Father. who takes care for, and feeks after him, when he had toolishly forfaken his Family, and done what he could to put himself out of his Fathers care; and is courteoully entreated to return back to that comfortable State

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flate and relation whence he had banisht himself, and upon condition of his return, sees another better estate provided for him, instead of that he hath wasted; and finds his arms open to embrace him, against whom he had lift up his hand? Methinks if thou beleev'it that God hath shewn such love to man, it cannot but have fome force upon thee, to bring thee back again to him from whom thou hast run away, and so long kept ata distance; and must needs prevail with thee to cast away with grief and shame whatever is displeasing to him, and doth estrange thee from him. And except thou be an unreasonable Infidel; thou canst not but believe it; for it is plainly revealed in Gods holy Word; where also we find the greatness of this love inculcated, in Gods having regard to us, and first looking after us, when we took no thought for our selves how to get his favour, 1 70b. 4. 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and fent his Son to be a propitio tion for our fins. Rom. 5. 6, 8. For when we were yet with out frength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. God commendeth his love towards us, in that whilf we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And as Christ died to bring us to God, so the consideration of this love should draw us to him. By this mecry chiefly we are engaged to offer up our selves a living sacrifice to God, which is our reasonable fervice. Judge thy felf, is it not most reasonable, that we should give up our selves to that God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, and with him freely gives all good things to his people? anfithou then find in thine heart to go on in provoking so goods God, and in flighting fuch matchless love? If thou canst, certainly thou hast banisht all gratitude, and hast scarce one spark of commoningenuity left in thee, yes, thou hast put off thy manhood, and art become little better then a senseless bruit; for what should sooner work

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work upon a reasonable creature to love another, than extraordinary and undeferved kindness which he hath received from him? Nay, I might go farther, and tell thee, and that justly too, the very beasts themselves have more good nature than fuch a flupid, unthankful finner as thou: For they have some sense of a good turn; and some love to those that do it; they know those that feed them and keep them, and use not to do them any mischief. The Dog does not use to bite his Master, nor the Horse to kick at him that looks to him. And so indeed God himself complains of ungrateful men, that when the Oxe knows his owner, and the Ass his masters erib, yet they did not know their Maker and Proferver. But to be short, let me tell thee plainly, if thou find'st thy heart nothing mov'd with all this love that God hath revealed, in fending Christ to fave us from the wrath to come, by his own sharp sufferings, I can no way fee but that thy Cafe is full as bad, yea rather worfe than his, who believes not a word of all I have faid. May, how indeed can it be imagined that thou believed these things, if they make no impression upon thee? except thon never use to think of them after thou hast read or heard them: but there's the wonder, it thou dost believe them, how thou canst chuse but think on them, and think again, till at length they work some good effect upon thee. But if thou haft hitherto been so strangely careless, let me once again desire thee now at length to fet upon the fober thoughts of this unconceivable mercy manifested in the Gospel, that when thou hadst even destroy'd thy self, God should make hast to thy help; that he should send his own Son to undertake for thee, who was also willing to this work, and should upon him punish thy fins, and now after all, only calls thee to cast away thy sin, and to return to his love; which if thou wilt do, he is willing to be reconciled

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to thee. And see if there be not good cause that thous should sthearken to these invitations, and whether there can be given any just or tollerable excuse for thy disobedience. If the bitterest enemy thou hadst in the world should but save thy life when it was in his hands, much more if he should endanger himself, or undergo any loss for thy safety, I am consident this would soon take off thy spleen against him, and make thee very ready to be restored to his friendship. And why the goodness of God should not be as prevalent with thee I cannot Imagine, if it be but soundly believed, and well

thought on.

2. I may farther add, to engage thee to return to the Lord from whom thou art fallen, another argument drawn also from the goodness of God, shewn in the death of Christ, as hereby it is most clearly discovered, that there's some unspeakable happiness whichwas purchast by the Lord Tefus for those that come to God by him, and to which he invites empty miserable creatures. Thou canst not imagine that God makes all this adoe with men for nothing. It was not upon any trivial errand that he fent his Son into the world; nor are they any flight inconsiderable things which he offers to as many as will receive him. It's true, the mercy had been rich and glorious, if Christ had only died to save us from misery, and to have procured of God, that we might have been reduced to nothing, rather than to fry in everlafting burnings; and no tongue can tell what a priviledge the damned in Hell would account this. But over and above, we read of a Kingdom of Glory which Christ will give to his followers. And how great this is, judge by the price that was paid for it; not filver or gold, or any fuch corruptible trifles, but the precious Blood of the Son of God without price, whose utmost value cannot be exprest by Men or Angels; and no more can the glory

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Fory hereby obtained. For if the Merchant he wife, the worth of his Jewel may be guest at by the price that he paid for it. Precious is the Soul of Man, and full dear did the redemption thereof cost, more than the whole world; or ten thousand such worlds as this: And is not, think you, the Souls portion answerable to its own excellency? And the purchased Possession anfwerable to the greatness of that cost that was laid out forit? When a common Slave thay be freed for a few fhillings, half a Kingdom will be thought little enough toredeem a captive Prince, and we afterward fee there is as much difference betwixt them when they have got their liberty, the one fits on a Dunghil, the other on a Throne. For certain then, Christ Jesus came into the world, and laid down his life to exalt those that hearken to him, to the highest joy and bliss of which the nature of man is capable, in delivering them from all line rendering them exactly conformable to God, and placing them in a constant full communion with him. He that so loved his Church that he gave himself for it to fandiffe and cleanse it, by all this design'd to present it to himfif a glorious Church. Upon this account therefore methinks thou should'st easily be perswaded to cast away in, which is thy mifery, and return to God, who is thy only life and happiness, and that no mean happiness, as I have told thee is evident, amongst many other realons, by the infinite value of the price that was given for it. Oh little do any, even the best and wisest on earth, conceive what are the full fruits of Christ's Blood; what miracles of divine love those are, which through endless millions of ages, will keep alive the admiration, by and praise of Angels and Saints; and fill the mouths of Christs Redeemed ones with continual thankfulbels, for that wisdom and mercy which contrived and wrought their delivery and exaltation. So that you fee, laying

laying these things together, the death of Christ, as difcovering the mercy of God, lays the greatest engagement that can be upon the Sons of men, to break of their fins and return to the obedience and love of God: in that there is fo much mercy procured andtendred may beget hope, and encourage to repentance, which is not like to be rejected; and as there is fo great love exprest, as may well call for the return of love, and even foften the most frony heart; and as it discoversion great a bleffedness to be had in God through Christ, & may prevail with all that love themselves, to make our after it, and depart from fin, which alone can keep then from it. And that's the second Consideration which the Death of Christ helps us to, in order to the working a kindly Repentance, namely the great goodness of God hereby revealed to poor finners.

3. From all that hath been faid, will more clearly

appear the hainous nature of sin, as a farther motive Repentance, in that it is a contradiction to all this loved God, and an undervaluing of the greatest mercy that we ever bestow'd upon the world; being in effect, a trampling under foot of the Blood of the Lord Jesus, whereby we should be sanctified. And hereby I mean those sim which have been committed since men heard of the Gospel. For as the evil of sin did appear in the greatest of those sufferings which Christ underwent to procure a pardon, so these his sufferings do exceeding aggravate their sins, who have continued in them, and they have been told again and again what their Savier hath done to make satisfaction for them, if they would not undervalue and dispise it. Oh how have you may

a shift so often to hear and read of the life and dea

of Christ, and yet have done all that in you lies cross the end of his coming into the world, and make his Death of none effect to you, while yet,

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pretend to believe that his defign was wholly for your good? Oh unthankful wretches, to make fuch a requital for fuch unvaluable love! As if you studied how you might most dishonour and displease him, who thought not his own life too dear to lay down for you. Could you fee him upon the Crofs wounded, torn, and bruised for your sakes, and could you think of no other recompence but to give him fresh wound by your wilful fins? Did he once dispise the shame and endure the Cross for you, and could you find in your hearts again. to put him to an open shame, and as it were crucifie him afresh? Did he indeed deserve such dealing as this at your hands? Bethink thy felf, Reader, whether this hath not been thy case. Hast thou not liv'd in those sins which Christ died to deliver thee from. And what hast thou thereby done less than proclaim, That there is more to be got by thy lusts than by thy Saviour, that it's better to remain in this polluted corrupt estate than to be wash'd in the blood of Christ, whereby our consciences are purged from dead works to ferve the living God? And did they vilifie Christ more, that contemn'd him, jeer'd him, and put him to death? If thou take thy Hefhly pleasures, and worldly profits, to be of greater advantage than any thing that can accrue to thee by Chrufts. Death, doft thou not think as basely of him as any of his Crucifiers did? And hadft thou been there with this frame of heart, is it not most likely thou would'It have joyn'd with them, whatever thou mailt now think? As they hated Christ because he told them the truth, and reprov'd them for fin, and therefore did all' they could, to rid themselves of one whose preaching and presence was such a burthen to them, so dost thou appear in effect an hater of Christ, his life and doctrine. whilft thou walkest so flatly contrary thereto. And what's this less than desiring that there was no God

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nor Christ to govern and judg thee, no such Rule as the Gospel to be thy Guide. Nay, let me tell thee, thou who hast profest thyself a Christian, and yet hast behave thy felf thus unworthily toward Christ, thou art herein more guilty than the Jews themselves: for what they did was very much out of ignorance, but thou after thou hast known he is the Son of God, and that he laid down his life for our fins, hast manifested all this contempt of him, and rejected him from being thy Saviour, whilst thou would'st not be saved by him from thy reigning luste, which thou hast loved more than him, as fud as loved the mony for which he was hired to betray him. After thou half known of that friendship which by the Cross of Christ was shewn to the ruined world, vet thou halt been an enemy to this Crofs, whilst thou hast made thy belly thy God, and minded earthly things : whilft thou hast delightfully liv'd in the practice of any known fin. What then, were the fews prickt to the beart, when they were convinced that they had crucified that Fefers, whom God bad made Lord and Christ? and shall it not have the same effect on thee, to consider thou hast been guilty in some fort of the same wicked ness, and hath shewn forth the very same spirit that was in them? For think not thy felf more blameless, because thou never faw it Christ, nor had it any handin his Death, nor did It ioyn with his enemies in accusing, condemning and reproaching him, but cry'st against them as moniters of men, that persecuted the most spotless Innocence with such savage fierceness: for all this while thy guilt may be as great as theirs, whilft thou half as great an emnity against the Image of Christ, and the Law of Christ, as they had against his person. And that thou do it not wound him, and spit in his face, is not from the goodness of thy nature, but because he is out of thy reach: for were he now before thee, and couldit gratifie

gratifie thy lusts so to deal with him, it's much to be feared thou would'ft not flick at it. Whil'ft the Pharifees condemned their Fore-fathers for killing the Prophets. they followed them in the very same sin. And suppose a Father had two Sons, the one at mans estate, the other an infant, and the elder of these by following wicked courses should break his Fathers heart, and occasion his death; and the younger when he was grown up, should lead the very fame life that the other did, but yet should take on him very much to condemn his Brother for being so disobedient and hard-hearted, as to bring his Father to the grave; is it not plain for all this, that had he been in his Brothers stead he would have done the same that he did? since he also takes those courses which were so grievous to his Father. Thus it is to be remembred that Sin was that which put Christ to death as well as the Jews. And this Sin is it thou lovest, though thou seemest to have them. And as those Fews put his body to pain by their cruelties, so do'ft thou grieve his Spirit by thy wickedness. And know, he takes it as hainously from thee, that thou should'st thus displease him, as he did from them that they should persecute him to the death. Nor art thou like to get a pardon at any easier rates than they, even no other way, than looking on him whom thou by thy fins haft pierced, and bitterly mourning for this thy bloodiness and ingratitude. What say if thou then after all this? canst thou without tears and groans look back upon all the disorders of thy life, whereby thou hast done all that in thee lay, to make those wounds of thy tender compassionate Saviour bleed afresh, which he first received upon thy account? I believe thou thought'se not of this: no, if thou had'st, one would think thou could'st never have done it. Thy design was only to please thy flesh by all thy sensual courses; thou wast only

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only full of projects to maintain and raise thy felfand thy posterity by all thy worldly designs and businesses wherewith through thy whole life thou haft been so swallowed up. But shou feeft how the case stands: that this while thou hast been most vilely rejecting, & even trampling upon the Lord Jesus, who would have brought thee off from thy vain conversation, from all thy ungodliness and worldly lusts, and hath followed thee with his Word and Spirit to that end, and hath prest thee with arguments drawn from his matchless love, discovered by his Death, and hath befought the to regard him, yea to take pity on thy felf, but thou hast made light of all, and hast gone on as securely and quietly in the ways of fin, as if thou hadst never heard what fin did upon Christ. And what? art thou resolv'd to do fo still? shall nothing stop thee in thy career? wilt thou not stay to hearken what a way it is thou walkest in? nor think what unvaluable mercies thou all this while treadest under feet? Hast thou not yet sufficiently abused thy redeemers love and patience? Half thou not made him wait long enough in vain? will thou still make shew of deafness to all those messages he sends thee? If so, yet be thou fure of this, thou shall not be able to fay at thy appearance before him, that thou never knew'ft that fin was fuch an evil thing, and fo provoking to him; for befide all other warnings that thou hast had, I now declare to thee who readest or head rest these words, that if thou still continuest in thy loofe ungodly life, living in fwearing, curfing, drunkennels, whoredom, covteoulnels, cozening, malice, or any other known fin, and wilfully neglected thy duty to God, going whole days without prayer or reading Gods Word, profaming the Lords Day, negle-EtingSacraments, if thou hold'it onthis course, thou dol no better than again crucifie and deny the Lord that bought

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fall under the same condemnation, which thou thy self wilt acknowledg, Judas and Pilate, and the rest of Christs enemies deserve: and therefore that thou maist not be sound amongst them, loaded with the same guilt at Judgment, I do once again in the name of Christ beseech thee with all speed to change thy heart and life, and use all means appointed to that end, and after all thy wandrings, now at length return to bim the good shepherd of souls, who laid down his life for his sheep.

4. Lastly, the Death of Christ may powerfully move thee to repent of, and forfake all fin, as it holds forth this weighty but fad truth, that all those who are despisers of this Death, and by living and dying in their fins reap no faving benefit by it, shall in their own persons undergo un-Supportable torments for this their unbelief and wilful impenitence. If thou believest the Gospel, thou canst not but acknowledge, that all men had been in a most miserable condition if Christ had not died; and thou wilt grant that fin is a most perilous mischievous thing, and an unspeakable provocation to the most holy God; fince nothing could appeale his wrath but the Death of Christ, without whose bloodshed we had obtain'd no remission: And what then dost thou think is like to be thy case, if through thy own fault, thou art never the better for all Christ hath done, but must thy self answer for thy fins, and bear the punishment they have deferved? Let the Death of Christ, I say, instruct thee what thou art like to expect if this be thy condition. If, as he himself speaks, such things were done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? If he who was without the least stain of original or actual fin, drank such a bitter cup, when he stood in our stead, what will be the portion of their cup, who, being poor frail creatures, must make fatisfaction for their own fins? How will they ever hold

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up under all the load of Gods hottest wrath, when he shall meet them in judgment, and cause his fury to rest upon them? And above all, thy impenitent, obstinate continuance in fin, and contempt of Christ, will lye heaviest upon thee in the day of vengeance. These sins against the Gospel, against mercy, the greatest and freest mercy, are most provoking to God, most inexcusable in themselves, and will therefore prove most pernicious to finners. Methinks then, if thou hadft but any regard to thy felf, to thy own ease and comfort, this should make thee out of love with fin, to consider how dear it's like to cost thee, how pleasant soever it may now feem. It was not for nothing that Christ felt fo much forrow and pain, as thou shalt know to thy everlasting woe, if thou pluck the heavy judgments of God on thy own head, by flighting him who would have kept them from off thee. Assure thy felf, poor sinner, as bold and confident as now thou art, thou wilt never be able to contest with that wrath, which exercifed even the strength of Christ to bear it; thou art newer like to go away lightly with that which he telt fo heavy. For shame at length leave thy foolish plea, that God will be more merciful than to torment his creatures: for hast thou not seen how he bruised his own Son, who never offended him, how he bruised him, I fay, for our iniquities, and will be then spare thee, who in thy own person hast been a most stubborn, hard-hearted rebel, and hast cast away with loathing the mercies that were again and again even prest upon thee? Thou halt no reason for such fond expectations. What? wilt thou tell Christ at Judgment, that thou didst not believe that ever God would be so severe, as to punish thee so dreadfully and everlastingly as his Word threatned? and that therefore thou took'ft somewhat more liberty in thy life than he allowed thee? Darest thou

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thou come with fuch a plea as this? But if thou shouldst, what wilt thou answer to Christ, when he shall lay open what he underwent for thy fake, and how thou madest light of his love? will not this foon filence thee? If he ask thee whether thou hadft not evidence and proof enough of the evil and danger that was in fin, by his fuffering so much for others transgressions, wilt thou have any pretence left to justifie thy felf? I may perhaps afterward urge this confideration, but I mention it now as offered to us by the sufferings of Christ, which do most plainly declare, that doleful are the miseries prepared for those that get no good by him, but die in their fins; which may bring all that are not in love with damnation, out of love with that fin which will at length plunge them into it. And thus you fee how many motives to true repentance are afforded us from the ferious meditation on the Crofs and Passion of Christ, as this discovers to us the hainous nature of fin; and as there is such mercy and love hereby reveal'd, as may work upon and reclaim all that are ingenuous, grateful, or wife for themselves; and as this makes fin more monstrously vile which shall be committed against such mercy; and as it shews that all men living in fin, dying out of Christ, are like to undergo unsufferable torments for their obstinacy. And thus I have finisht the second qualification which is necessary to all worthy communicants, to wit, True Repentance, an unfeigned forrow for, a detestation of, and a turning from all willful fin in he art and life.

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CHAP. IV.

III. A right remembring the great end of the Death of Christ, to redeem us from all iniquity, and sactifie us. Of Faith and Covenanting with Christ.

IT must needs he, that if we rightly remember the Death of Christ in the Sacrament, we must then remember to what end and purpose this was: and this we shall plainly find in Scripture to be, that he might redeem Man from that finful miserable state he was faln into, and restore him to a state of holiness and happiness in the enjoyment of God from whom he was faln. So 1 Pet. 3. 18. For Christ also bath once suffered for fins, the just for the unjust, that be might bring us to God. Epb. 2. 16, 17, 18. Heb. 7. 25. And this is the meaning of all those places which speak of the Redemption we have obtain'd by Christ, if we take it in its largest signification. And to this purpose he offers himself to Men to be their Redeemer, to conferr upon them the pardon of their fin, and give them victory over all their corruptions, and the temptations of Satan, and to lead them by his Spirit through this dangerous world, till he shall bring them with triumph into the kingdom of the Father. Now hence it follows, that no man can remember Christ as he ought, who will not receive him to thefe ends and purpofes for which he offers himfelf, which is our effectual believing in him. For is he a fit man to celebrate Christs remembrance, who hath no love for him, nor any liking to his undertaking, nor will be perfwaded to comply therewith? And fuch are all they who reject him and the tenders of his mercy, except they might have them in their own way, and that do flatly contradict his defign in becoming our Mediator, by contius.

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continuing still in their natural corrupt estate, alienated from God, and liable to his wrath: that is, who are unbelievers. So that here I mean no more than. That without Faith in Christ we cannot rightly remember bim, without we so believe that he is the only Saviour of Markind, that we refolve, he, and none but he, shall be our Saviour, in the way that he himfelf thinks fit ! But ? to make it yet plainer, how unfit all fuch rejecters of Christ are to come to this holy Supper, consider, that our receiving of the Sacrament is appointed to be on our part, as a token and fign of our making and renewing our Covenant with God in Christ, in which if we be fincere, then it is a feal on Gods part, of his being in Covenant with us; a confirmation of our belief, that he will be our God, and fulfil all his promifes to us; and herein he gives us an earnest and pledge of the future bleffings which we shall receive from him through his Son, as Ishall shew under the next Head. Does it not then hence appear, that all those who will not be held in any fuch Covenant, are most unfit persons to come to this Sacrament; the very delign of our coming to which, is to shew that we are a people in Covenant with God and by this folemn action taking and eating the Bread, and drinking the Wine, we are to testifie that we are fo, and do here oind our felves fo to remain. What would this be, but with much formality to mock that God who will not be mocked, and even to ran upon our own damnation, provoking the Lord to destroy those, who so impudently take his name in vain. By this practice men are guilty of a down right lye. yea of großest perjury : for Christin effect faith, All you, and you only that take me for your Lord and Saviour come O partake of this Feast which I have appointed in remembrance of the Redemption I have wrought for you, and yet multitudes who will not take him for their Lord to rule

over them nor will be faved from their fins by him thrust in and partake of this Supper. This is just as if a General of an Army, having a mind to fingle out fome of his Souldiers for some defign, should say, All you that are willing to go along with me, bold up your hands and yet many should hold up their hands who refuse to go: wha rwould this be but to befool themselves and abuse their Leader? Or, as if at the first appointment of the Palleover it had been commanded, that they, and they only, should eat of the Paschal Lamb, who would go out of Agypt into Canaan, under the conduct of Moses; and yet many of the Israelites should prepare and eat it, either because they were hungry, or because they would do as the rest did, without ever thinking What was the meaning of this action, or what they here! byengag'd themselves to, being resolv'd still to continue in Egypt, neither caring for Mofes, nor the Canaan which he should lead them to. Thus when Christ commands, that all those who will depart out of the Egyptian bondage they are in to fin and Satan, and be guided by him through the Wilderness of this world, till they come to the heavenly Canaan, that they should appear at a Feast which he hath made on purpose to entertain them, there throng in others to this Table who have no right to eat thereat, as having no resolutions to leave their fin, and thus to follow Christ, who would lead them to glory. These are the men that are found without their wedding garment, whom the Master of the Feast will draw out from amongst the rest, and dispose of them to a place and company more suitable for them, as you may read, Mat. 22. 10, 11, 12, 13. So that I hope you fee that it's a most unsuitable and unlawful thing for any man to address himself to this Ordinance, who is not heartily in Covenant with God, fince herein he professeth himself to be so, and therefore if

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But fince this is made by fome the very nature and defign of the Lords Supper to be a Fæderal Rite, or an action testifying and confirming a Covenant betwixt God and man, as in the Eastern and other Countrie they were wont to ratifie their Leagues by feating together, and as they who eat of the facrifices offered to Devils thereby had fellowship with Devils, as the Tews by eating of their facrifices held communion with and profest subjection to God, as you may see them parallell'd, 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Since Ifay, this is on mans part a fign of his being in covenant with God; I shall somewhat fuller explain what this Covenant is, that you may understand whether you are cordially entred thereinto, and are willing to continue in it, that so you may know whether you are like to be entertained as worthy guests at the Lords Table, which

is proper to his Covenant-people.

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In a word then, the Covenant which we renew ar the Lords Supper, is the very same with that you were entred into by Baptisim, when you were baptiz'd in the Name of (and thereby engaged to) the Father, Son and HolyGhoft; and therefore obliged to those duties which we ow to God in the feveral relations wherein he stands tous, which are denoted by the Persons of the sacred Trinity: That is, we are hereby oblig'd to aknowledge God the Father to be our Creator and Preserver. and therefore to behave our felves as his creatures ought, submitting our selves to his Commands and Providences, and placing our happiness in pleasing him and enjoying his love; God the Son made man, that is Jefus Christ, we are hereby bound to take for our only Saviour, through whom alone we hope for the pardon of our offences, and for ability to serve and please God. and for acceptance and happiness with him: And God

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God the Holy Ghost we promise to take for our Sancliffer, to have our fouls by him renewed after the Image of God, and those graces given into us which were purchast for us by Christ, and the evidences of Gods love, and of our title to the future bleffedness to be clear'd up, and affur'd to our consciences; the Holy Word also which he inspir'd the Prophets and Apoftles to write, we are hereby engaged to take for the Rule of our faith and life. And this is your entring into Covenant with, and being confecrated to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which doth necessarily suppole and include our renouncing the flesh, the world; and the Devil, which is in effect the same with Repentance for fin, which I spoke to largely under the last Head: For he who is truly humbled for and resolved to forfake fin, doth hereby renounce his flesh which is pleas'd with fin, and will not make carnal felf his chief end, and he also renounceth the world, which is the fuel and food of his lusts, all that wherewith the carnal part is gratified, as matters of pleasure, profit, honour, and the like, not regarding them as means to his happiness; and he renounceth the Devil, who by temptations drawn from these worldly things, would entice him to fin, and that wicked nature also which does the office of a Tempter with him. All you then, who have been baptiz'd into the Christian Faith, are thereby bound to take God for your Supream Governor and chief Happiness, and Jesus Christ for your Mediator and way to the Father, and the Holy Spirit for your Sanctifier and Guide. And fince you were Infants when you were thus first dedicated to God, it behoves you that are now come to the use of reason, and are resolv'd by the grace of God, to be stedfast in this holy Covenant, to come to the Lords Table, and there profes these resolutions, and by the receiving of this Sacrament

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ment in the presence of the heart-searching God, and all your Fellow-Christians, to renew your engagement that you will take God for your God, and that you will be his people. Since then it is so plain, that they, and they only are worthy Communicants, who have in heart made this Covenant with God in Christ, which they are to profess, solemnize, and confirm, by eating and drinking the Sacramental bread and wine; it remains that all, who would not venture upon damnation, by doingthis unworthily, ought to enter into a faithful examination of themselves, whether indeed this be their condition and frame of heart, or not. And let me befeech thee, Reader, faithfully to fet upon this Work. as a business of the greatest concernment that ever thou hadft to do in thy life; namely, to fee that thou art fincerely in covenant with God through his Son; for this is the very heart and substance of Religion, the Sum of all Christianity, and that upon which thy everlasting happiness wholly depends; know but this once, and thou mayest know that Heaven will be thy portion. flouldit thou dye at this hour.

And here, that I may do what in me lies to help thee to the true knowledge of thy felf, let me first advise thee to look carefully into thy own heart, for that's thy surest way, if thou art but well acquainted with the workings thereof, and wilt deal impartially. And in this searching into the state and temper of thy Soul, I would wish thee to put these questions to thy self which

I shall ask thee, and to give in a true answer.

I demand of thee then, what is that great good on which thou hast placed thy highest love? the obtaining of which thou hast made the great business of thy life, and which if thou couldst but attain to, thou believest thou shouldst be satisfied and made perfectly happy? Canst thou say, and that truly, that God hath the up-

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most place in thy heart, that his authority sways thee most, and that, for the main, all things that concern thee are regarded but in order to him? Dost thou make it thy principal study and trade to please him? And dost thou count of nothing as fit to make thee? portion but his everlasting love? If it be thus with thee, then thou mayst safely conclude that indeed thou hast made God thy chief end. But enquire diligently who ther it be not quite otherwise, and whether thou hast not fet up thy felf in a diftinction from God, becoming thy own Idol? Art thou not possest with high thoughts of thy felf? loving and admiring thy felf, separate from him who gave thee thy being? It's true, the man who is most heartily devoted to God hath the greatest love and veneration of himself, but it is as he is Gods creature; and it is his foul which hath his highest esteem; and he feeks his happiness by subjecting himself to God, and therefore prefers, adores, and admires God infinitely above himself, regarding himself in and for God, accounting it the end of his being to fervehis Makers will and defiring no other felicity, than the feeling of that love of God which he manifelts to all fuch humble obedient ones. But the carnal man, though he may have some reverence for God, and may yield him some tribute of service, some prayers, some praises, and some Subjection, yet all this is but in order to his carnal felf, for the procuring for it such things as cannot be had without God; fo that God is regarded but as a means to Jeff, and with a respect hereto is all his service of God, for the manner and measures of it, fram'd and limited Thus may the covetous man, whole chief end is to en rich bimself, prayto God for riches, praise him for riches, be so far just and charitable as he thinks may forward his thriving; yea he may be in all things fo far religi ous as hinders not his chief end, but let this once come thee

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in competition with any duty to God, fo that by ferving him he should impoverish himself, you shall soon perceive what is his God, and what rules him most, as you have an example in the young man that came to Christ, Mat. 19.21,22. wherefore examine, I say whether thou art not a lover of thy felf more than God. Does not thy own will and fancy ordinarily guide thee in thy actions and affairs; and is not that course taken which most conduceth to the interest of thy flesh; should'st thou not then account thy felf well enough provided for if thouwast but compleatly furnish'd with all that in the world, which tends to the accomplishing and gratifying of man as he is an inhabitant of the earth? And is not thy labour most for, thy desire after thy delight in fuch things as tend to the pleating and advancing thy self in the world? Hast thou not been most taken up in making provisions for thy flesh? thinking with thy felf, that to be happy was to live a merry life, and take thine ease and pleasure; or else to get more money than thy neighbours, and to have more respect and esteem, that where ever thou goest thou maist be praised and admired? Hast thou not taken those for the happiest men that have the greatest share of these things? and hast thou not therefore envied them? and hated them, if they have stood in thy way and kept thee from the like? Reader, what faith thy Conscience to this? Do but hearken, and it will speak plain and tell the truth. Sure thou canst not but know what thou makest the great end of thy life, what it is for that thou desirest to stay in the world; what thou risest for every morning, and for what thou goest into this company and that, and takest all thy journeys, and wholly employest thy hands and head. All this is either for God or for carnal felf principally; for there cannot be two chief ends. And if thou art one that livest to, and Idolizest

lizest thy self, for shame take not on thee to love God above all, as thou usest to do: for indeed thou dost not truly and properly take him to be God, not thy God.

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Again, let me ask thee, hast thou ever found in thy Soul powerful and prevalent convictions, that thou half no way to attain true happiness, nor to escape misery, but by the Lord Jefus Christ? And hast thou thereup. on heartily consented to his offers, and to the conditions he hath appointed for the faving of thy foul, being willing to be taught and govern'd by him, only hoping for pardon of fin, grace, and glory to be given to thee by God through him, and for his fake? Put the question to thy own heart, didft thou ever yet fee an absolute necessity of Christ, so that thou took st thy self for an undone creature without him? And hath thy foul been kindly and thankfully affected with this amazing mystery of love, that God hath shown to poor helpless sinners through his Son? Hath it warmed and rejoyced thy heart to confider it? Thus in some good measure will it be with thee, if thou art a true Believer in Christ: And this depends upon the former: for if thou half taken the everlasting enjoyment of God for thy chief happiness, thou wilt then be ready to comply with that way which leads to this end, and that's only shew'd to us in and by Christ, who is himself the way to the Father, and none can come to God but by him. And when thou art once throughly perswaded of this, thou canft not but willingly relign thy felf to him, confenting to be fav'd by him, on what terms, and in what way he thall appoint and prescribe to thee: and this firm and prevalent confent of thy foul is true and faving faith, to which the pardon of fins and everlasting life is promised. This is coming to Christ, receiving him; and feveral other ways it's exprest in Scripture, but most ommonlycall 'd our believing in bim, which includes

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in it, our trusting to him for all mercy, our hearkening to his teachings, and our refolutions ferioufly to obey his commands, and imitate his example. Examine thy felf well then, whether thou hast such a found faith wrought in thee or not. Hast thou not rather contented thy self with a sluggish unfruitful belief, that Christ is the Saviour of the world, without ever minding thy own particular need which thou stand'st in of him? nor ever making enquiry what he would have thee do to be faved? Have not thine eyes been so far blinded, that thou never yet faw'ft so much evil in sin as should make thee look out for a deliverer, and prize him who hath done so much to redeem thee? But canst make shift well enough to live without Christ, so thou canst but get those things which thou now takest to be more useful for thee, in order to thy happines? Thus will it be with thee, if thou hast set thy heart upon the pleafing and advancing of thy carnal felf; thou art not then like to fee any great need of Christ, or any excellency in him that should make him desirable: for he came not into the world to help carnal wretches to the enjoyment of their Idols, but to turn their hearts off them, to the living and true God. And therefore as they who have chose this God for their portion, do make it their great work to get an interest in Christ the Mediator, and do live upon, and make use of him to bring them to their portion, so they that have made the pleasing of their flesh with any worldly thing their ultimate end. they are diligent in the using of all means that may help on this their base end. The voluptous, brutish sinners hunt after sensual pleasures in their meat and drink, wantonness, sloth, excessive sports, and merry jovial company. The covetous man who hath a greedy infatiable fancy to gratifie, wholly spends himself in treaturing up wealth, and he tafts sweetness in nothing

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but his gains. His Bonds and Bills and Leases are better things to him than the Covenant of Grace; and his Houses and Lands and Money more precious than the Blood of Christ. And so the proud and ambitious, that would fain have much effeem and honour in the world (which is the most natural vice to almost every man) they pursue their design, by labouring to get into high places, to make great men their friends; recommending themselves to the world, by their sumptuous House, great Retinues, rich Cloaths, gentile deportment, and the like braveries; others by their strength, beauty, with learning, and the like Accomplishments of Body or Mind. Thus you fee, according to the nature of men happinnels, they make use of means to teach it. Search well therefore, whether fome of these or the like empty trifles have not been more fet by, and laboured for, that Christ himself; if so, never say thou takest him for thy Mediator; for it is apparent, thou dost not make him 10. No, but those things are indeed thy Mediator, which thou makelt use of to accomplish thy selfish de figns. And hereby thou dost in effect as much reject and vilifie Christ, as if thou didst revolt from him, and take Mahomet for thy Saviour. Oh beware of deceiving thy felf in this point, which is so easie, so common, an dangerous, to talk of trusting and relying on Chris whilft the heart relyes most upon some outward enjoy ment to bring it to the happinness it seeks for, and the most they look for from Christis, to have him kee them from Hell, after they have been all their days gr tifying their lufts, and ferving the Devil, but they ver think of improving him as a Mediator between God and their fouls, expecting all their mercies of life and the next, to come by him; and by him offern up all their services to God. Wherefore I beseech to remembe, that nothing will prove you fincerely

Covenant with Christ, as one of his living members, but a thorow, stedfast willingness to be brought to happiness by him in his own way, and let it be your care to

examine whether you are thus heartily willing.

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And then lastly, hast thou submitted thy Soul to the powerful workings of the Holy ghost, to renew and regenerate thee? Hast thou faithfully rendred up thy self to him, to be transformed into the divine likeness, to have thy corruptions purged away, and all faving graces implanted in thee? It is the Office of the Holy Ghost to carry on Christs interest in the souls of men, to fulfil all the pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, tobring them to the Father by the Son. No man can cry Abba Father, and be filled with a childlike disposition and nature, but he who hath seceived this Spirit of adoption; and no man can call Fefus Lord, and be heartily subject to him, but by the help of this almighty Spirit. He shews men the vanity of the Creature, and the goodness, the fulness, and all-sufficiency of God, and enables the heart firmly to cleave to him: He convinces men of fin, and shews them the odiousness and danger of it, and discovers to them a Saviour, by whom they may be redeemed from all their iniquities, from the dominion, and from the condemnation of sin: And he begets in the foul a faving faith, making men not only willing, but earnestly defirous to accept of Christ to both these ends. Reflect upon thy self then. whether thou hast experienced any such workings in thy foul or not, whether thou art changed by this divine power into a new and heavenly nature, and art hereby become a new creature, as all in Christ are, old things being done away. Hist thou ever found the vigorous and warm movings of this holy Spirit upon thy heart, conveying light and life to thy dark foul, dead in trespasses and sins? Hast thou carefully cherished these motions, and.

and complied with this fanctifying work, which forest it fel through the whole man? And art thou willing to be govern'd by him to hearken to his voice within thee, and to that word which was inspired by him to bea lamp to thy feet? If these things be fo, then indeed thou haft performed the engagement that was laid upon thee, by being baptized into the Name of the Holy Ghoft. But call thy felf to account, whether it hath not been quite otherwise with thee. Dost thou not still remain in the carnal selfish state, alienated from the life of God through a blind mind, and a wicked flub. born will, being still at enmity with him? Hast thou not quenched the Spirit? and stifled convictions, and refifted his operations upon thy foul? Art thou not rather guided by the feducing spirit and thy own unmortified Justs? Do not these still remain in strength and power, fo that whatever they draw thee to, must be done, let the Word and Corscience say what they will? If it be thus, never boaft of having God to be thy Maker, nor Christ thy Redeemer: for if thou art not fanctified by the Holy Ghost, God will never own thee for his, who accepts of none but an holy people.

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Thus by looking carefully into your hearts, you may discern whether you are truly in covenant with God, or not. And if this seem any matter of difficulty, to know what your hearts are; or rather, lest you should pretend your hearts are thus right, when it is no such thing, I shall give one instance more whereby you may know how you stand related to God, and that is by the consideration of your lives and conversations: for, if you are sincerely devoted to God in your hearts, then you must needs shew it in the holiness of your lives, which is nothing else but the keeping of that Coven int which is made bet vixt God and the soul. If you do indeed sollow after b liness, it's a sign you account

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It your chief happiness to fee God. If you are patient and unweared in well-doing, it's a fign you feek for bonour and glory with God. And if you keep the Commandements of Christ, endeavouring to walk as he walk'd. it's manifest that you love him and believe in him. If you bring forth much fruit, bereby you and all men may know that you are Christ's Disciples, that you are living branches of him, the true Vine; then have you received Christ, if you walk in bim. And if you hew forth the fruits of the Spirit in your live, it's a fure token that his graces are fown in your hearts. If you are led by, and walk after the Spirit, then indeed the Spirit is with and in you, and you live in him, Gal. 5. 25. But on the other hand, it's as certain thou art a stranger and alien from this Covenant I have before described, if thou be one that screek the Devil rather than the true God. Make what profession thou wilt to love God and believe in Christ, if thou allowest thy self in any one known fin , all thy great pretences will at length come to nothing. What, doth that man love the Lord, who doth not hate evil? Nay, who delights in that which the Lord abhors, and wherewith he is griev'd and provok'd to fury? Doth hetake Christ for his Lord, who will not be obedient to him? Doth he take him for his Physician, who would not be heal'd, but had rather keep his Diseases? Beware as thou lovest thy foul, of that dangerous mistake, that thy belief in Christ may ferve turn well enough for thy falvation, without an holy life; for if thou leadest not an holy life, it's most cerrain thou dost not truly believe in Christ, For it is not enough to prove thee fuch a Believer as shall be faved. totrust in Christ's merits, and hope God will be merciful to thee for his fake, but it is also of absolute neceslity that thou belive in him as Prophet, and King, and accept of him to teach and govern thee, if ever thou hope

hope for any faving benefit by him: and therefore thou must believe his Promises and Threatnings, and faithfully endeavour to yield an universal obedience to his Commands, and to follow his footsteps: So that to fay thou halt a good faith in Christ whilst thou livestan ungodly life, is as flat a contradiction, as to fay, thou art faithful to thy Prince, whilft thou rifeft up in arms against him; and so much as an oath of Allegiance and Fidelity to their Soveraign doth tye men from Rebelli. on, so much doth Saving Faith bind them against wickedness. And to talk of keeping thy faith firm whilst thou livest in disobedience to thy Lord, is as if a Wife should say, she was careful in keeping her Marriage covenant whilst she lived in open adultery. Thus much here I was willing to speak of this, that thou mailt be the more plainly convinc'd, that if thou livestin, or lovest any sin, and wilt not leave it, though Gods Word and thy own Conscience condemn thee for it, that then thou art not fincerely in covenant with God. Wherefore look well into thy life, confider thy ways, how thou behavest thy felf towards God and man, and in all thy carriage in the World. Art thou not a wilful neglecter of thy duty to thy Maker, living withouta sense or acknowledgment of him in all thy ways, not fo much as once in a day, or perhaps in a whole week, fetting thy self seriously to pray to him in thy Family or Closet, not taking any pleasure in reading his word, or in thinking and speaking of him to thy own and others advantage? Dost thou not profane the Lords day, and turn thy back with contempt upon the Ordinances of God? Art thou not us'd to swearing, cursing, and taking the holy Name of God in vain in thy common discourse? or art thou not guilty of lying, cozenage, injuffice in thy trading and dealing with men, of oppreilion and unmercifulness to the poor? Dost thou not

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not live in envy and malice, allowing thy felf in railing, back-biting, and flandering? Or, doft not thou rioroufly abuse the good creatures of God, eating and drinking to excess, unfitting thy felf for Gods fervice. and studying only to please thy palate? Dost thou not pollute thy foul with wanton thoughts, discourses and unclean practises? Dost thou not mis-spend thy time in idleness and vanity, carelesly wasting precious hours that should be improved for Gods honour, by getting or doing good? Dost thou not give way to thy pride in thy discourse, carriage or attire, lavishing money and time for the gratifying of this base lust? Put such questions as these to thy foul, and answer them impartially and truly. And if thou livest in any of these, or the like wilful fins, be affured thou haft been falle to the Covenant which thou was entred into in Baptism: But if thy Conscience can truly witness for thee, that thou batest every false way, hast a respect to all Gods Commandments. earnestly desiring and diligently endeavouring in all thy ways to approve thy felt to the most righteous God, longing after nothing more than that thou maist walk unblameably before him, then thou mailt safely conclude that thou art one of Gods Covenant people. and as fuch he will own thee, and to thee belong the priviledges and benefits of the Covenant, and therefore the Seals of it too; fo that thou haft very good warrant to address thy self to this Sacrament, whereby all the promises of God are confirm'd to his people, and whereby they profess the hearty rendring up of themlelvesto him.

By this time I hope thou feeft what it is to be cordially in covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoft, which all are engaged to by Baptism, and which Covenant they renew at the LordsSupper, namely, to love God above all, and to account his love thy chiefest

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chiefest happiness, to accept of Jesus Christ as thy only Saviour to bring thee to this happines; and to be willing to be fanctified by the Holy Ghost, and led by him in the ways of holiness. Now, if thou findest thy felf strange to all this, and didst never yet feel thy foul brought under the bond of this Covenant, my next work is to perswade thee to it, even to beseech thee deliberately and feriously, but yet speedily, to make a firm and everlasting Covenant with God to be his upon his own terms, to be absolutely devoted to him in heart and life, as thou wast in Baptism. Something I shall say to prevail with thee, if possible, for the performance of this weighty indispensible Duty. But by the way take notice, that all I am exhorting thee to may well be included in this one word, even Believing in felas Christ, which is that qualification I am now up. on, discovering the necessity of it in all Communicacants. And this I would have thee to observe, that thou mailt the better understand what I mean when I press thee to faith in Christ, as making it all one with he Covenant now mentioned: For, as I have before intimated, he that truly believes in Christ receives him in the quality and office of a Mediator, by him to artain to that happiness which he offers to men; and confents to be brought to it in that way which he thinks fit to direct. Now the happiness he offers, is the enjoyment of God in glory, and this he hath procured for Believers by his fatisfaction and intercession, and fits them for it by his Spirit, which cures all their diftempers, and raiseth them to a perfect love of God and likeness to him, and so makes them capable of full communion with him; which is their bleffedness. So that to receive Christias he offers himself to us (which is our faith in him) not only fignifies our dependance on his merits for the pardon of lin, but also includes in it our

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love to God above all, to whom we hope to be reconciled and brought nigh by Christ, and contains in it our resolution to submit to the working and guidance of the Holy ghost, who purifies the heart; and enables us to follow after holiness, till we are brought to the fight and fruition of God. Ishall attempt to make it as plain as may be, by an easie comparison. Suppose a King had banish'd a great company of Subjects for rebelling against him, into a foreign Country, where they stay so long, that they have even forgot the manners and language of their own Nation, and are become wild and barbarous, like the peoplethey convers'd with, and after some time, this King, taking pity on his banish'd Subjects, should agree with his only Son, that if he would venture upon the hazards and troubles of folong a journey. he should take a chief Officer along with him, and go to these Rebels, with proclamation of pardon to all such who should acknowledge their crime, and were willing to return into their own land, there to live in the obedience and favour of their Soveraign; and in order hereto, would come to this Officer to be taught by him the language of their Country, and how to behave themselves so as they might please their King, and be at to be in his presence: When now the Kings Son thould come to these men, and shew them his Commission, and perswade them to be ruled by him, who is come so tedious and dangerous a journey to free them from the miseries of banishment, proposing the terms. on which he will deliver them, all those that believe he speaks true, and hath power to help them, and being willing to be delivered upon his conditions, do put their trust in him, by his means to be restored to the favour of their Prince, and their former habitations, they do by this very action manifest their love to their astive Countrey, and their willingness to live in obedience

dience to their King whom they had displeased; and do hereby also engage to accept of this Officer that accompanies the Prince to teach them the language and manners of the Country they are about to return to. The application of this to the matter in hand is very easie: for in the same manner doth Faith in Christ, and our acceptance of him, imply our love to God, and desire to live for ever in his favour, which is that Christ offers us, and by his death hath purchased for true Believers; and it implies also our willingness to be sanctified by his Spirit, that we may be made meet to live for

ever in the love of God.

Oh hearken then and give ear, all you lost finners, (fomewhat to purfue the former comparison) all you that are the posterity of finful Adam, who by his transgreffion banish'd himself out of Paradise; you that are wandring up and down in this wilderness, and have even forgot the heavenly Country, as if you were made only to be inhabitants of this lower world, here to live with the Beafts a miserable life for a while, and hereafter to dye like Beafts that perish; and accordingly make it your only work torun, and ride, to labour and toil for fuch things as are needful for this prefent life, without regarding that which is to come; whill you are thus estranged from God, forgetful of, and daily running farther and farther from him, beholds meffage of glad tydings and great joy is dispatch'd to you from heaven. The great God that made you, take pity on you, and is even grieved to fee what a mifery you have plunged your selves into, when he made you so happy. He is by no means pleased, that such noble Creatures, lately raised out of nothing for such glorious ends, should through their own folly, and the subtily of the tempter, be debased into such a wretched, forded flavery. Wherefore in pursuance of his gracious de fign

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figns for your recovery, and to shew how his bowels vern over you, he hath fent his own Son out of his bofome, who is one with himfelf, to take our nature upon him, and to become one with us, that he might be rvery way fit to be a Mediatour betwixt God and us? that he might teach us by his doctrine, encourage us by his example, and make atonement for us by his death. Accordingly all this is done, the Son of God is come into the world, and hath abundantly evidenced his Commission from the Father, to treat with lost mankind about their reconciliation to him; for the procuring of which reconciliation, he laid down his life; and being risen again, he furnish'd his Ambassadors with authority to affure all, that life was given to the world, and this life was in the Son, fo that be who bath the Son, bath life. And this is that message which the Ministers of the Gospel at this day, and to the end of the world, are to proclaim to the fons of men. This, Sirs, is the joyful found that is now in your ears: If you will but trust your fouls with Christ, and confent that his spirit should teach you the language of Canaan, and work in you an heavenly nature and disposition sutable to the state and place he would bring you to, then shall you be happy with God for ever. What fay you then? shall Christ be your Redeemer, to bring you to glory upon these tearms or not? What have you to object against him? Do you think he doth not mean as he speaks? or that be cannot do what he promifeth? Dare you question his power, his willingness, or his truth? It you will not believe his word, yet give credit to his Death. Does not that tell you he is in good earnest with you, and fully bent upon the Redemption of Mankind? And beside the miracles wrought by, and upon him, which fully witness for him, let his Resurrection put you out of doubt, that him hath God the Father fealed to this Office

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of Mediator: By this, affurance is given to all men, that he is to be Judge of the world, and therefore that all are delivered into his hands, to fave or condemn, as he shall think fit: and he hath plainly declared, that to those who receive bim, he will give power to become the Som of God; but as for those who reject him, upon them the winath of God abides for ever. But these things I shall branch out into two or three particular considerations, to perswade you, if it may be, to accept of Christ the Prince of Peace, who comes with the tender of peace to your souls: to accept of him. I say to wash you in his Blood, and sanctifie you by his Spirit, that at length he may present you without spot or blemish into the presence of his Father.

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Perswasions to accept of the Redeemer, and give up the Soul in Covenant to him.

A ND first consider, I am only persuading youter to be Christians, which you profess your selves to be. And will you not indeed be what you profess; why do you embrace the name, if you dislike the thing; I know you have false measures, whereby you judge of Christianity, and think perhaps, that all who are Bapty zed, and keep their Church, and call themselves Christians, are so indeed: but you should rather say, such do profess themselves so to be, but they are not so in Gods account, except they are true to this profession. He that wears a Noble mans Livery, seems to be his Servant; but if he will not acknowledge him to be his Matter, by doing what he commands him, you will scarce say such a one's his Servant; however, not a Servant to

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be maintained, but cashier'd and punished : and if you are but fuch kind of Christians, you will acknowledge it was as good you were open Infidels. Will you think it enough to prove a man your friend, that he calls you fo, and gives you many good words, and promifeth you great matters, and in the mean time secretly does all he can to hurtand displease you? Even thus hath Christ decided the case, and told us who are his Friends, not they that onely speak honourably of him, and pretend great esteem for him; no, but they who do what he commands them, John 15.14. And if you will not do thus, and yet will needs please your selves with a concelt that you are Christians, notwithstanding; you may eafily be convinced, that if your Christianity will not bring you to be lifted with the friends of Christ, but leaves you amongst his Enemies, its like to do you very little service. Wherefore he is only the true Christian, who takes Christ in all those relations in which he is represented in the Gospel, and is willing to perform the duties that these relations bind him to. And to such areceiving of Christ I am urging you. Can you be Christians without taking Christ for your Lord? And can you do this without you are willing to be governed by him? Is he a disciple of Christ that will not learn of him, and that will not believe what he speaks to be truth? To give an instance or two, Christ bids you harn of him to be meek and lowly, and if you will not do thus, are you indeed any of his Disciples? He tells you, bis yoke is easie, and his burthen light, and therefore requires you to take them on you; if now you think them hard and heavy, and therefore reject them, do you not in effect give him the Lye? He tells you he is the author of eternal salvation to those that obey him, and it you refuse obedience to him, and yet pretend you hope to be fav'd by him, can you count this believing

in him? When he would redeem you from your iniquities, and you will not part with them, do you take
him for your redeemer? So that its evident you are
not really, and in Gods account, Christians, except you
are willing to be guided by Christ to happiness in the
way which he hath revealed; wherefore you must see to
come up to this, or be reckoned as Heathens and Infidels, and accordingly dealt with cand chuse you whe
ther, if indeed you find any difficulty in the choice.

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2. Confider fericusty what a kind of defign it is that Christiones to you upon and fee whether it be not molt reasonable you should comply with him. ... He offers himself to be your Saviour, and what can you say why you should not close with this offer to Examine what hurt there is in that work of Christ upon your Souls, and gainst which you are most prejudiced. He would take off your affections from earthly things that cannot fatisfie them, and feethern on things above, which will prove a durable portion. He would cure the blindness bruitifhness and deadness of your Souls, and raise you to the greatest liberty and freedom of mind, and to the most reasonable excellentilife whereosypoware capable He would bring you out of darkness into light, from pain and grief to the most manly joys; he would delive you out of the noise and tumult of your lufts and palls ons, and fettle you in a fweet and fleady peace. Infless of being unferviceable to God and man, and destroy ers of your felves, he would make you fruitful and use ful in your generation, and your own truest friends. I fpeak of the present effects of his operation upon your Souls, which would receive an unspeakable advancement, by being freed from the dominion of Sin and Satan, wherein Christ finds you. For certainly to be thus enflaved is the greatest misery that can at present befall you, as it debases and defiles you, and puts you

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out of that order in the Creation which God placed you in. Nothing in all the world can be fo much difgrace to you as this: for of reasonable Creatures, you are hereby become like Bruits, yearn some fense worse; and instead of the Image of God, you bear the Image of the Devil, through your love of fin and enmity to holinoss. And do you think there is no hurt in all this? No? not in becoming Ideots and Fools, living contrary to, and below your reason? not being like the Devil, whom you cry out upon, and pretend to abhor? Isit no dishonour to you to have him to be your Father whilst you do his works? Well then, I hope you have nothing to fay against Christ, who comes to recover you to your felves, to bring you into your right wits, to shew you your former folly, and make you ashamed of, and humbled for it, that you may for sake it: whole delign is to raise you to the priviledge and dignity of your natures, by repairing Gods image upon you which you had lost, bringing you to love that which is best for you, to beware of what would hurt you, and to be weaned from those things that will leave you, and cannot make you happy. And if you have nothing to object against all this, much less can you speak against his intention to keep you from milery, and make you bleffed for ever, if you will hearken to him, of which I shall speak by its felf. Where then does the matter flick? what can hinder you from coming to Christ, who only calls you to him to take off your load, and lighten your burden, and to give you eafe and reft.

3. Consider what Christ hath undergone in order to the making of your peace with God, on condition of your acceptance of him. He became poor to make you nich; He became the Son of man that you might be the Sons of God; he came down from heaven to raise you thither; He entred into combate with the Devil that you might

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be enabled to conquer him. He bore the worlt the world could do, and overcame all its assaults, that you by him might overcome the world. He drank the bitter cup, the dregs whereof you had otherwise been drinking eternally. When the fword of justice was even ready to sheath it self in your bowels, he came betwist, and seceived it into his own. He willingly gave up himself to the death, that bitter, cruel, shameful death, that your Souls might live for ever. He bore your fins, that they might not lie on you as an heavy load, to fink you into the lowest hell. He was made a curse, that you might escape it and obtain a bleffing. And after all this that he hath done and suffered, shall he be rejected? Hith he done thus much in order to your deliverance, and shall all be lost as to you, as if it had never been done? What? hath the Son of God, manifest in the flesh, shed his warmest hearts-blood to be as a Balsom for your wounded Souls . and are you not willing it Thould be applied? Methinks common ingenuity Thould tell you that such matchless love as this should not be so slighted. If you were taken captive by the Turks, and a near Friend should venture his own lifeto free you thence, fure you would be willing to return with him, though you might have great offers to flay behind, if it was for nothing else but to gratifie your Friend, who had ventured to hardly for you, that you might not give him cause to repent of his labour. And what? shall the blood of Christ be as it were spilt on the ground, and have no effect on thee; How hard is that Rock whom this will not foften? I beseech thee, Reader, to think what Christ hath gone through to deliver thy Soul from the jaws of death, and then think whether it be just and reasonable that he should return without his errand. I know I have mentioned this before, but I shall not stick to inculcate it again

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again and again, that it may have some force, so me power upon thy heart. And to that end, before I leave this Head, let me intreat thee to imagine, that thou faw'ft Christ Jesus now before thee all in blood and wounds, calling thee to him as he did Thomas, bidding thee to thrust thy hands into his side, and put thy fingers into the print of the Nails, and suppose thou hearest him faying to thee, Look here finner, behold thefe tokens of my love, fee what I have endured on thy behalf: ob be not faitbless but believing; be not perverse and obstinate, but willing to come to me, who have felt fo much pain to procure thy eafe, if thou doft not wilfully refuse it. Cast away those fins which have used me thus; trust thy self with me, who have given such costly evidences of my defire to do thee good; accept me for thy Redeemer, who have paid (uch a price for thee; own me for thy Lord, who have thus brought thee out of flavery; follow me in the way I shall shew thee that I may bring thee fafe into the presence of the Father, whom I have reconciled to thee: Suppose, I say, thou should'st see Christ even covered over with his own Blood, importuning thee thus to forfake thy fins, and accept of his grace and mercy, what wouldft thou fay? what answer would'st thou give? could'st thou find in thy heart to contemn him, to ftop thy Ears to his requests, and go away without regarding him? or would'st thou tell him he had not done enough to engage thee to him, and that thou saw'st no reason to hearken to his offers, that thy fins were more fweet and precious than grace and glory, and any thing he would give could possibly be? Surely thou durst not. And if not, then let not thy heart and practice return the same answer to me, who, in the name and flead of Christ, beseech thee, that thou wilt through him be reconciled to God. Even by all. those wounds which Christ suffered upon the Cross, by all those pangs and dolours which he felt in his Soul by H 3 his

his cries and groans, by his tears and blood, I do, as upon my knees, befeech thee to give an hearty entertainment to the Lord Jesus, who was thus bruised and wounded for thy fake. Oh let him in thee fee the travel of his Soul and be (atisfied. No longer cherish those lusts which resist his entrance, off with those Bars and Bolts that have lockt him out; down with those strong holds that have stood out against him, let the Gates of thy Heart flye open, and let this King of Glory come in; cheerfully, thankfully receive him, and absolutely render up thy self to him, to be disposed of as he shall think fit, only begging that thou maist be taken into the number of his Redeemed Ones, and be enabled to perform the duties enjoyned them, and be fitted to enjoy the priviledges affured to them. This is that faith in Christ which I would so fain perswade and beg thee to, and that by the confideration of what thy Saviour hath endured upon this account, that through faith in him thou mightest be pardoned and saved.

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4. Confider, as what bitter things Christ underwent to purchase salvation for thee, if thou reject him not, for what a most reasonable condition he bath appointed theeto perform, that thou mighteft obtain falvation by him; even thy unfeigned willingness to accept him for thy Redeemer , and thankfully to receive the benefits which he hath purchast for thee. And will not this induce thee to enter into Covenant with him, when the terms thereof are so fair and gracious? This thy hearty confent, that Christ thall perform the whole work of Saviour to thee, and for thee, is the chief thing required to make thee one of his Members. This is the great Command of the Gospel , to Believe in Jesus Christ. So that thou hast nothing to say on thy own tehalf, if thou shouldest be found at last to have negle Hed this duty : for tell me, couldn't thou have defined

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any thing more favourable? If thou hadft been enjoyned some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? much more now thou art only required to be willing to have Christ, and life with him, and all shall be thine. wilt thou not be brought to this? But still remember the Offices of Christ must not be divided, nor his benefits separated: He must be taken for thy Lord to rule. in thy heart, and govern thy life, as well as for thy Saviour to keep thee from mifery; and thou must be as willing to feel in thy Soul the power of his Cross crucifying thy lusts, as to have the merit of his Cross procure thy pardon; now thou multbe brought to the love of heaven above earth, if thou wouldst be received this ther by Christ when thou leavest the earth. But yet in all this, it is but the confent of thy Soul which is principally required, in order to the attainment of the offered mercies. And wouldst thou have matters brought down lower yet? Wouldft shou be faved against thy will? And hal'd to heaven, when thy heart is against it? Or wouldst. thou have such kind of exceptions as these put in with the conditions of thy falvation? That thou mail have liberty to trample on Christs blook, and yet be wash'd in it. from the guilt of fin; that thou mayft have leave to ferve the Devil, and yet receive from Christ the wages be gives. his faithful ferwants; that thou mail be allowed to love treatures more than God, and yet that God hould love thee with his dear eft love of that thou maift live without grace. and yet when thou died be received intag lary. Wouldet thou indeed make fuch terms as thefel if it was letted thy own choice? Thou couldly not fine be fo foolily forbalely difingenubusordf not, then dome in and fubrait to thole conditions that are now offered thee, than which thou canft not, his thou beek well in thy with with for any that should be more suited to thy case and interest. Hearken then to the free and affectionate invitations of H 4 Christ

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Christ himself, be every one that thirsteth, let him come t me and drink; and who soever will, let bim take the water of life freely, If 55.1 . Joh. 7.37. Rev. 22.17. Give not Christ cause to complain over thee, that thou wouldst not come to bim that thou mightest have life; that he would have gas thered thee as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but thou wouldest not! Oh what a cutting thought will this be in hell, to remember at what cheap rates thou mightest have escaped that misery, but wouldest not! how eafily, how certainly thou mightest have been happy for ever, but thou wouldest not! The way was shewn thee, and thou wast exhorted, and befought again and again to walk in that way, but wouldest not heark en, Christ would have been thy Saviour as well as others, but thou wouldst bave none of him, being in the number of those rebellious ones, who would not that be should reign over them. And how utterly inexcisable wilt thou beat the day of accounts, when it shall be askt thee, what reafon thou hadft for thy not closing with Christ, when he offered to have faved thee? what answer canst thou then make, except this may go for an answer, then thou walt fully refolv'd against it? What though thou hadst not wit or learning to improve for Christ, nor an estate to lay out for him, yet hadft thou not a will to embrace him and his tenders? Couldst thou not have loved him, and have given up thy felf to him? Could men or Devils, or any thing but thy own wretched obstinacy and pervertenels have hindred this? Thou who are now reading this, who haft heard the Gospel again and again, can'tt not pretend ignorance: for thou hast been many times informed, and once more let me affure thee, that if thou are willing; Christis willing; yea he's earnestly desirous of thy happiness, and had rather thou woulded turn and live, than go on and die: yea, he hath fer himself full in the way to prevent thy damnation

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so that thou canst not go to hell, but thou must tread him under thy feet, who stands betwixt to keep thee thence. If now at this very moment thou wilt comply with the defign of Christ, to save thee in the way he hath establish'd, he will surely perform all his promises to thee. But beware of deceiving thy felf, pretending that thou art willing to have Christ, and that thy heart is wholly fet on him, whilst yet in thy actions and conversation thou art not subject to him: for the tenour of thy life will be fure to follow the bept of thy heart. the temptations of Satan do ordinarily prevail with thee against the commands of Christ, doth not he possess thy heart, who can thus put thee upon action? If thou followest thy pleasures or worldly business to the neglect of God's service, is it not plain that thou lovest the world and thy flesh more than God and holiness. Canst thou be diligent to please those whom thou hatelt, and to injure and provoke fuch as thou lovest best? These are too gross pretences to pass for current, and thy own conscience cannot but be convinced of their vanity and falshood. If thou consentest that Christ alone shall be thy Saviour, thou wilt depend upon him only forthy falvation; if thou art willing he should govern thee, thou wilt in the course of thy life yield obedience to him. If thou fayest thou half not power to be willing, prethee examine what this means, but that thou art abfolutely unwilling, and then whose fault is that? Who is it, I would fain know, binders thee from being willing? or whom dost thou think to lay the blame on? Be assured the holy God will clear himself if thou should'st lay the cause of thy damnation on him, as if he did not give thee grace enough to change thy heart; fince thou didle not improve that measure of Grace which was given thee, and didft by thy willfulness keep out what was farther offered to thee . And thou wilt have small comfort

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comfort in laying the fault on the Devil or thy wicked companions; thy accurations of them will be far from acquitting thy felf. They shall dearly answer for what they have done, but yet thou wilt still be left liable to justice; yea, thou wilt be found to belye the Devil him felf, if thou fay it he was the chief cause of thy ruine: for he could never have deceived and undone thee, if thou hadft not been willing to hearken to him, and be deluded by him Nor could thy companions have drawn shee to fin, if thou hadft not first been in love with it : for neither they, nor the tempter, whose instruments they were, could thus prevail with them whose hearts were against it. Neither will it excuse thy rejection of Christ, to say thou never hadst sufficient reason given to draw thee to him, and that thou never heardelf of any fuch advantages to be had by him as might allure thee; for thou shalt then be made to acknowledge, that in the thing it felf there was reason, abundant reason, for thy acceptance of him. But if it did not prove fulficient to work upon thee, why was this? Was the Gospel unreasonable, or wast not thou unreasonable in flighting it? Was it hid from thee? If fo, was it not because thou didst permit the God of this world to blind thy mind, and keep thee from the knowledge of the truth? If thou art still in the dark, is it not because thou lovest darkness more than light? Art thou not so fully bent upon the latisfaction of thy Lusts, that thou will hear of nothing that should draw thee from them? An thou not flothful and negligent, and wilt not mind things, nor consider seriously of thy fin or danger, of the love of Christ and thy need of him, and the like Subjects, the meditation whereof, through the bleffing of God, might have foftned thy heart, and bowed thy will to a thorough complyance with the Lord Jefus. And doll thou indeed think that thy wilful affected ignorance

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norance shall be held as a sufficient plea for the neglect of thy duty? If when thou fett'ff thy fervant to work in thy Shop, he should shur up the Door and Windows to keep out the Sun, or by night should purposely put out his Candle, and then pretend he could not fee to do his work, wouldst thou take this for a good excuse? And doft not thou do thus, who wilt not hearken to nor consider of the word without thee, and putt'st out the light of thy Conscience, that Candle of the Lord within thee, whereby thou mighteft be led to Christ. and then crieft thou canst not find the way to him? If a Prince should send a Proclamation to Rebels, promiing pardon to those that would come in, but threatning destruction to such as should perfift; if they stop their Ears when it is read to them, and will not enquire after the Contents of it, will it excuse them afterwards to fay, they never heard any invitations to lay down their Arms? Nor, farther canst thou truly say, that Christ required harder things of thee, than this willingness of heart to be faved by him; for wast thou once brought to this, whatever elfe he requires from thee would appear rafie. So far as thy will is made conformable to his there will appear no more difficulty in obeying his commands, than an hungry man finds in cating, or than's duntul Child finds in pleasing a loving Father. To do his will would then be thy great delight, thou wouldeft find a new nature within thee, carried forth with a mighty power and fweetness to all those acts of obedience that flow from a willing Soul. But yet farther for thy conviction. Supple a Noble-man should offer to a Beggar, that if the would pur of her Rags, and wash her felf, and put on the Apparel he had provided, and leave her vagrant life to come and dwell with him, and be his loving and faithful Wife, that then he would marry her, and inflate her in all his honour and riches: wouldft thou

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thou fay there was any thing required of this Woman besides her willingness to become his Wise? I hope to throw away her rags and leave her wandring companions, and live like a person of honour, does not look like the paying of a Portion, or doing difficult works. And this is the very case; poor and naked the Lord less finds thee, only covered over with rags and filth; these he bids thee to strip off, to wash thee and make the clean, and put away the evil of thy doings, to renounce thy lusts, to forfake thy finful courses and companions; to put on the white Robes which he hath provided for thee, to be cloathed with his perfect righteousness, that the guilt of thy fins may not appear; and to bea dorned with the graces of his Spirit, that thou may ft be lovely in the fight of God, having thus put on Christ; and he offers to espouse thee to himself, and become thy Husband and Head, and make thee a Joynture of Heaven it felf, if thou wilt continue in love and faithfulness to him all thy days. Where then is the Down that must be given him? No, he asks for none, 'tis thy felf he defires, and bids thee come boldly without mony or price. What easier terms, what fairer offen would'A thou defire? Shall I then prevail with thee or not? Even as Abraham sent his Servant to seek ! Wife for his Son Isaac, fo do I now address my felf to thee from my Lord and Master Jesus Christ, earnestly desiring to espouse thee to him as a chast Virgin. With Commission from him I make these tenders to the: Behold this hour a message of infinite concernment and greatest favour is sent to thee: Christ Jesus the King of Glory offers himself, with all he is and hath, to the and by me his Servant thy confent is now demanded What answer dost thou give me? Wilt thou be married to him or not? Wilt thou not give me that comfortable answer that Rebeckah did to Abrahams's Serman

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yant, Gen. 24.98. I will go with the man. Shall I make no the match this day betwixt Christ and thy Soul ? If thou fayft No . God that stands over thee will witness. thy own Conscience will witness, yea these very lines shall witness against thee, that Christ did freely offer himself and salvation to thee, and thou didst perverfly reject him. But God forbid, thou should ft do thus foolishly: in the bowels of Christ let me befeech thee not to turn the deaf Ear to this message. Do not read thefe things flightly, as if they concerned thee not: but rather stay a while, and let thy thoughts dwell upon the matter. If there be not all the reason in the world for what I urge thee to, flight it and spare not; but examine things well, and fee thou contradict not thy own reason, nor undo thy felf by inconsiderateness. Once again then lask thee, artthou willing to betroth the felf to Christ, forsaking other Lovers that have fued forthy heart? Wilt thou promise to cleave to him at all times, and in all conditions, and through the affistance of Grace, to be faithful and constant in thy love and obedience to thy lives end? If thou fay Yea, and art fincere in this resolution, then doubt not but it will be accepted and ratified in Heaven's what thou haft done this hour will be recorded by God himfelf, and remembred for ever. And do thou make hafte to thy private Chamber, there more expresly and folemnly to profess this thy engagement to Christ, and come to the Lord's Table there to feal and confirm this Marriage Covenant; and let it be thy care all thy dayes to continue stedfast therein, and then doubt not but Christ will perform his part to a tittle.

this faving Faith in Christ, which is nothing else but thy consent to be married to him, to receive him for thy Lord and Saviour, as I have before explained it, let me

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entreat thee to confider the advantages thou Shalt berein receive from him. If thou ask me what thefe are, I may answer, they are fo great that I cannot tell thee; they are fuch as thou must not, thou can't not fully know till thou art posses of them. He that was perfectly at quainted withithem all might be to all eternity in rewealing thems for for long Thall the true Christian he in enjoying them. But yet left thou should think these were but only words to draw thee on and deceive thee, know that lamable out of the Book of God to tall thee formuch of thy gains by Christ and line between as will certainly bring thee to him; if thou will be ruld by the truel reason, and der waded to chuse what is best for thee in one word then be assured thou shall have all that may make thee truly happy in this world and the next for even, Pfal. 84, 3311 1 Fin. 4.8 Rom. 8.28 And what can thy heart with for more? That very day wherein thy Soulis thoroughly brought over to Christ throu haft right by wertue of his rich promife; to all that is and heaven and earth that may be for thy good, and accordingly shalt brilly it, as thou come the someed it, and art made meet to receive to So foon as by faith thou artiunited to Christ, the suite of all former fins is done away; and feet the tuturoshy derrices shall bead copied, and thine imperfection lorgiven : for God is become thy reconciled Father, and will love, own, and bles theo as his Child. And cand thou want any thing who half God to be thy Eather, who ownerhall things? yea, who halk him to be thy portion, who is better than all things? All his Attributes; his wifdom, power, truth and goodness will be engaged on thy behalf, and employed for thee; distworks, his word; and all providences shall help forward thy happine B. All thy outward affairs, thy heavenly Eather, who knows what thou haft need of will fee and regarder at all times be will id dispose יחנד כבי

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dispose of and-provide for thee, as shall be most for thy advantage; no affliction shall befall thee, but will prove as Phylick for thy Soul; in all estates and conditions he will be near to thee to direct and preferve thee if thou retain thy integrity, fo that neither Men nor Devils shall prevail against thee to thy ruine. And the Holy Ghost will be thine to enlighten, fanctifie, guide, and comfort thee, to affift thee in duties, and to feal thee up to everlasting happiness. When thou diest the Lord Jelus will receive thy Spirit, and preferve thee from the roating Lion, and the Pit of destruction : and vouchfafe thee the beginning of happinels with himself, which shall be compleated and perfected at the great Resurrection day, when thou shalr be raised up by his power, and brought into appearance not in wrath but in mercy and shalt be publickly owned by that Chrift, whole person and cause thou didst here embrace and own; and by him thou shall be openly justified from all acculations of Satan or the Law; and shall be presented pure and holy into the presence of the Father and shalt be eternally blessed in the enjoyment of all those treasures of infinite love and goodness, which God hath laid up in store for Bellevers. This is the inheritance which we come to by Christ: we are made hers of God yea coherrs with his own Son we enter upon the 19y of our Lord; with him we (hall abide in the man from that are in our Fathers House. Then at length we shall know all the designs of Divine Wisdom and Love, when they, hall be accomplished in us and for us: and by the fruition we shall understand, what is that exceeding and eternal weight of glory, for which there were made fisch wonderful contrivances, such folema preparations, by that God who doth all things like himself, being infinitely wise and good. Then shall we reach to, and find those glorious things that are spoken of the City of God. Yea,

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yes those things which it was neither lawful nor possible for Angels or men to utter. To be short, thou shalt then be advanced to the utmost possible perfection of thy nature; thy Soul shall be fitted for those actions and employments which are most suitable to it, even the loving and praising thy Maker, Saviour, and Sanctifier: and shalt be made capable of tasting the most ravishing, fatisfying sweetness and joy in these employments, in pleasing the blessing God, and in feeling thy self encompassed with the warm embraces of his dearest love. And as this thy bleffedness shall be infinite and unspeakable. To shall the continuance of it be eternal. Nor shall thy delight be once abated or interrupted through all this eternity, but be ever exalted to the highest pitch; it shall always flow, yea overflow, but never ebb. This is the joy that hath no end, no measures or decay. This is the glory which Christ will give his fervants; not as the world gives, gives he unto them. This, he tells us as the will of him that fent him, that every one that fees the Son, and believes on him may have everlasting life; Joh. 6.4. The water which be gives us to drink shall be in those who partake of it, a well of water foringing up into everlafting life. And some beginnings of this divine life now, there are brought into the Soul, whillt it is madein its measure conformable to God, and is carried our after him with the Strong Workings of love and defire, and feels the shedding abroad of his love in it felf, and live in the joyful expectations of an advancement to the abundance of life, the perfection of blifs which Lbe fore mentioned. And now Reader, if thou believelt all this, which I think thou must needs, except thou take the Gospel to be a cheat; if then thou believest it to be true, I would know of thee, whether the invitations Christ makes thee to come to him, be not backt with fufficient motives to prevail with all that are not quite belide

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By this time I hope thou seeft that thy Redcemer seeks thrinterest, whilst he is so importunate with thee. what is all for in the refult but this: That thou would'it make thy felf bleffed for ever. This he commands thee, this he beseechs thee to do. And shall such commands be disobey'd?ihall fuch requests be denied? Good Lord! How strange a thing is this? That Man a reasonable Being. whose wisdom sets him above all other creatures on Earth, should be thus woo'd, thus call'd upon and intreated to be happy, and yet that he should stand dallying and deliberating whether he hadbest be so or not; yea, that he should peremptorily refuse to be so. Which should I most admire in this case, the distraction and base ingratitude of man; or the inconceivable mercy and patience of God, fo long to bear with fuch unworthy creatures, and so frequently to renew the offers of bleffedness; and even press it upon them? Well then, do'ft thou think there is any gain in godliness? Is there enough to be had with Christ to make him and his gifts worth the accepting? For that I tell thee still is all that is expected from thee: be but cordially willing to take him, and all his benefits together, and for certain all shall be thine. Thou shalt find every promise of the book of God made good to thy comfort; yeathou shalt find ten thousand times more than ever thou could'st understand or conceive from the fullest promises, the highest expressions that ever thou mett'st with concerning the priviledges of Believers. Shall all that is faid then bring thee to be one of that number or not? Do'st thou know where to make a better bargain for thy self? If so, take thy own course, and make thy best on't: for be affured, Jesus Christ needs not thee. His glory doth not so depend on thy subjection to him that it should be lessened in case of thy disobedience.

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Do thou as thou wilt, he knows how to fecure his own interest: but fain he would perswade thee to take pity on thy felf, and favethy own foul. If there be any in all the world that hath done more for thee than Chrift or that will do more, hearken to him and spare not But before thou conclude there is any fuch person or thing, examine matters well on both fides; and then do as thou feeft meet. Indeed the case is so plain, that the veriest child or fool almost may know how to decide Bethink thee well what thou art like to have from the world, from thy lusts, from the service of the Devil. or from any thing that would keep thee from Chrift, Canst thou think that the fatisfying of thy senses with what they call for, or pleafing thy fancy with things for perfluous, or living in idleness and wantonness, in pride and pomp with the applause of the world, is any or all of this better than the love of God, better than the fulness of joy to be had in his presence, or better than the rivers of pleasure at his right hand for evermore? But be they as good as they will, doft thout hink they will always last? Or hath the Devil any future reward for his servants, when their miserable slavery in this life is ended? Amongst all his temptations, did he ever fo much as once bear thee in hand, that he would make thee happy for ever? Is it possible for thee to be ignorant, that the pleasures of sin, besides their emptiness and baseness, are but for a season? So that if thou remain without Christ, thou hast no whither to go, nothing to trust to, that will not miserably fail thy expectations. Look round about thee, and see if thou canst find any other foundation to build upon, to raise an happiness to thy felf. And when thou hast but considered a while, with that seriousness that beseems one who hath a defire to do himself good, I doubt not but the language of thy foul will be like that of Peter to Christ, Job. 6.68. Lord,

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Lord, whither shall I go? thou only hast the words of eternal life. Thou only hathrevealed it thou alone directest to it thou only hast purchast it, thou only hast promised it, and thou alone canst bestow it upon thy people:wherefore to thee Lord I betake my felf, renouncing all things that stand in competition with thee; be thou my Lord, let me be thy fervant; let me live to thee here, and letme live with thee for ever hereafter, partaking of that glory which thou hast obtained of the Father for thy faithful ones. What faist thou? Does thy very heart agree to these words or not? Say yea or no before thou goest any farther. I am sure thou hast nothing like reason to give, why it should not. Oh give not Christ cause to wonder at thy obstinacy and unbelief, who when he came to bring thy falvation, was rejected. Once again, I affure thee, he comes not to un. do thee. Think not thou shalt lose by him, because he calls thee to mortification, felf-denial, and bearing the Crofs. If he would take thee from any thing which is dear to thee, 'tis onely because it is hurtful: and he'll give thee better delights, more noble employments than those he calls thee off from. Thou shalt part with nothing by his fervice which thou could'st have kept long, and instead of it thou shalt receive a treasure that shall never be taken from thee. But if thou art fo fast bound to thy profits, thy pleasures, and thy fweet fins, to which thou haft been long accustomed, that thou will not be perswaded to take thy love offthem, and fet it on Christ, but art so swallowed up with them, that thou turnest the deaf ear to all these intreaties; if this be thy resolution, that Baal shall be thy God, and him thou wilt worship, that the world thall be thy portion, and to it thou wilt cleave, that fin shall be thy trade; and in it thou will live: Remembe: then thou hadft thy choice: Christ tendered himself and all his faving mercies to thee, but thou didst deli-1 2

berately prefer other things before him, and therefore thou halt no wrong done theeif thou goest without him. If this be thy thanks to him for his marchless condescension in inviting thee to glory, grudg not if hereafter he exclude thee from it. And now get thee to thy Idols, which have so taken up thy heart, that there was no room for Christ, except he would have the leavings of the world and flesh, which, be it known to thee he never will, he'll have the highest place or none, and fince he must not have that, go thy way I say, and make the best of thy Idols, thy riches, thy bravery, thy carnal joys, and empty honours, thy dear friends and pleasant companions; fuck all the fweetness they will yield, and keep them as long as thou canst: and when thou feeft where they leave thee, and what thou hast brought thy felf to, then let thy Conscience reflect, whether once thou hadft not an offer worth the acceptance.

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6. But this brings me to the fixth and last argument to prevail with thee to give up thy felf to Christ, and that is the lad and doleful effects that are like to follow upon thy rejection of him. If God do just and true, thou art not like to go smoothly away with the guilt of this hainous fin. Something to this purpose I mentioned before, and therefore shall be the briefer now, onely in faithfulnessand love to thy immortal foul, that thou may't never be able to fay but that thou hadft fair warning given thee, I now come to tell thee, that if thou standest out against the mercy that's so freely held forth to the, refuling to receive thy Saviour on those terms, and to those purposes for which he demands acceptance, thou art then like to beas miserable, a forlo rn, undone, creature both body and foul, as ever trod upon the earth, or faw the Sun. Make as light of these threatnings as thou wilt, but if there be a God inheaven, be alfured they will be made good upon thee, as shortly thou

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wilt feel to thy everlafting forrow, if thy speedy conversion do not prevent it. Think not I take any delight to dig in the bowels of hell, and throw flashes of in thy face, meerly to terrifie and daunt thee: no, but I would fain, if possible, prevent thy misery, by discovering what it's like to be, if thou throw thy felf headlong into it. And oh that I could speak any thing that might make some impression upon thee, not only to bring thee to a fright, and there leave thee, but a little to awake thee to a fenfewhat a mischievous thing that sin is, which now thou art fo deeply in love with, that thou may'ft fee to get thy hands rid of it, before it be too late to wish thou hadst done so! Even during this present life, whilst thou art without Christ, thy condition is moll fad, however thou may'ft applaud and blefs thy felf in thy worldly enjoyments. For thou art this while under the load of thy Original fin, and all the transgreffions which thou halt actually committed in thought, word, or deed, fince thou camest into the world; the least of which, without pardoning mercy, would drown thee in perdition. Thou hast no certainty for an hour of any of those things which thou possesset, but are liable to as short warning as the rich Fool in the Gospel, who was call'd away in that night, wherein he bid his Soul take it's eafe, eat, drink, and be merry. For thou canst not flew any true title, by virtue of a promise from God, to the least of all thy comforts: But thou standest always exposed to that wrath which thou art treasuring up for thy felt against the day of wrath. wholly at his mercy whom thou art daily provoking to fury. In all thy ways which are so defiled, the holy God beholds thee in anger, and even loaths thee for thy filthiness. And he alone knows how short a while he is determined to wait on thee: thy Glass is running. his patience is expiring, Death and Judgment are ha-I Iting droimed

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fting, Hell is ready burning, and thou canst not promise thy felf a moments fafety. Whilft thou art fleeping or waking, eating or working, talking and laughing, the heavy doom hangs over thy head, and thou hast every day reason to expect the dreadful vengeance of the Lord to feize upon thee: nothing but meer mercy bath kept it off this while, which will not always laft. A night when thou goest to bed, its a great hazard but thou may it awake in flames, and never more fee the comfortable light; or when thou goeft out of doors, its a question whether thou mayst not with Fudas, goto thy own place, the infernal Mansions, before thou returnest home. For ought I know, or thou either, this may be the last Book that ever thou mayst read, this may be the last warning that ever thou mayst have. Think a little whether this be a comfortable case fora man to continue in, and what wife people they are that venture all upon a Repentance hereafter. Moreover in all the troubles thou mayst meet with in the world, I knownor what support, what comfort can be administed to thee: for there's none to be given thee from God, I am fure, whilst thou art a resolved enemy to him. What shift thou makes to get a little ease and relief at such a time I cannot but wonder: only the remnants of thy carnal comforts, and the hopes thou hast of seeing things better, its like may help thee to some false peace. But alass poor man, Death will shortly arrest thee; Death that will strip thee of all that thy heart delighted and trusted in; Death that will break the neck of all thy fond hopes, and utterly frustrate thy expectations. Death that will carry thee out of this beloved world into a place to which thou hast been a meer stranger, not thinking of it at all, or but coldly and feldom, or with horrour and averines; this Death, I fay, will shortly lay hold on thee, and then whither wilt thou look for comfort,

comfort, who art a stranger to God and Jesus Christ? Into whose hands wilt thou commend thy departing foul who would'ft not whilft thou wast living, refign thy felf to the God who made thee, and bought thee with his Son's blood? Canft thou expect Christ should now receive thee, who wouldst not be perswaded to receive him? What? receive a Rebel into the Kingdom of peace? A filthy Swine into the communion of Saints? No, never expect it. And if he will not receive thee, who must? If heaven may not hold thee, what place will? Thou canst easily answer these questions. And when by a refurrection to condemnation, thou art made with all the rest, to stand in the presence of thy Judge, how wilt thou then appear before him? For the Lord's fake, yea for thy own fake, poor finner, thou that canst not be brought to like Christ, nor his holy Laws and ways, nor the fanctifying work of his holy Spirit, put these questions as thou readest them, close to thy heart. What wilt thou then fay to Jesus Christ for this thy contempt, and diflike of his person and government? Darest thou then justifie thy unbelief and impenitence, when he calls thee to answer for it? Or who wilt thou get to plead for thee, when the only advocate shall condemn thee? Whom wilt thou make thy friend, when he, who alone could, and would have been fo, is, through thy own fault, become thy greatest Enemy? Date Angels or Saints speak a word for him against whom their Lord shall speak? Or would they if they durst? No. they will approve his righteous sentence. Will the Devil take thy part dost thou think? Hath he any power there to secure his followers? why it's he that is thy acculer, and if need be, would rather aggravate those faults which he drew thee to. Wilt thou then hit him in the teeth with the large promises he made thee, and call on him to make them good? Alass, he'll but laugh 14

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at thee, and fcorn thee, and make thee acknowledge, that most justly are all they served, who would trust to the Devils delusions rather than to Gods promises. Or dost thou expect relief from thycompanions in tormen! Ah poor creatures, they would rather help themselves if they could, but cannot: Oh then! with what an heart, with what a countenance wilt thou hear that last doleful sentence, Depart from me ye cursed! when thou shalt look round about and see no help, no hope, but that down thou must lie in that burning lake, which the breath of the Lords fury like a stream of brimstone doth kin. dle, what a posture will thy soul be in; I can tremble to conceive it, easier then I can express it. And when thou hast lain some thousands of years in that place of torments, what then will the workings of thy heart be; when thou hast felt that tribulation and anguish which comes upon those that work evil, what thoughts wilt thou have of the ways that brought thee thither? what would'st thou not do for the least dram of hope in that miserable despairing state, for the least glimmering of light in that gloomy darkness? But there is none to be had, no nor ever will through a whole eternity : the force of which word eternity, and the meaning of Hellis now known and felt in another manner, than when careless sinners could laugh at the mention of them, or sleep whillt they were preach'd on. But what? canst thou not perswade thy self that there are any such torments prepared for unbelievers? If not, it's to be feared thou art one of those unbelievers for whom they are prepared: But if Scripture may convince thee, read amongst other places, 1 Toff. 1. 8, 9. Mat. 25. 46. John 2. 26. and then tell me thy judgment. Now indeed all this is but talk; Hell's out of fight, and the most terrible words are but wind : n I therefore it is there is fo little care in the world to make ture of his favour, who can fave them

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them from this mifery, which, because it's neither seen nor felt, is slighted and forgotten. Should a King take a company of men out of prison, who had committed some fault worthy of death, and offer pardon to those that would be forry for their crime, and promise never to be guilty of the like, but threaten death to those that would not; and withal should shew them pardons ready sealed, and great hopes of money to be given to the penitent, but racks and gibbets, and fires ready kindled, for the execution of the obstinate: Do you think this would not cafily prevail with them, when they faw in good earnest what was like to betide them? And if Christ would take this course, and shew Heaven and Hell, if that were possible, plainly to their eye-sight, its like the most stubborn sinners would be awakened; but he will not do thus, nor is there any reason he should. Since we are made men to be ruled by reason, why should he deal with us like Brutes that must be led by their Senses? yet because he will not take this way with them, brutish sinners disregard him, as if they needed him not, But ah Sirs! all you that could fee no need of Christ, when he was so urged, and prest upon you, when shortly you shall see all the world stand before him, and shall behold the devouring flames, into which all they must be cast, who have not apart in his love; then you will fee what benefit comes by Chrift, then you will no longer count them Fools, that took it for their greatest buliness to get an interest in him. Then, if the most pathonate wishes, that you had been so wise, would do you any good, if the loudest roarings, and bitterest cries for mercy might prevail, you would think them all well. spent: but alass, all will be to no purpose. Cry Lord, Lord, with never fo much noise and earnestness, if thou walthere a worker of iniquity, no other Answer shalt thou obtain, but, Depart from me, I know thee not. And thou

thou thy felf shalt be forced to acknowledg, that this Sentence is as just as terrible. For did'ft thou not here bid Christ to depart from thee, thou defired ft not the know. ledge of his ways? and is it not just he should then command thee to Depart from him, as one he will not know nor own? Heaven thou did'st refuse, since it was to be had on no other terms than submission to Christ: and therefore thou must needs fall into Hell, since there is no third place provided. But perhaps thou wilt flatter thy felf with a conceit that none of thefethings shall come upon thee, in that, as thou pretendeft, thou putt'it thy whole trust in God that he'll fave thee, and reliest upon thy Saviour Jesus Christ alone, to be kept by him from Hell, and the power of the Devil. But beware, befeech thee, how thou chearest thy Soul into that mifery, whence no trick or wile can ever fetch thee. Do'st thou put thy trust in God he'll take thee to heaven when thou dieft, who now allowest the felf in those very fins for which he hath threatned to turn men into Hell? If indeed thou doft for then I hope it is some promise of his that thou bottom'it thy trust upon, or relie it is a vain confidence: now shew me, if thou canft, one promise in the whole Book of God, that gives thee the least ground to hope for happines, whilst thou continueft in an ungenerate natural effate, in love with thy fins? take thy Bible, and turn it over from one end to the other, and fee if thou canst find any such place, but I could flew thee an hundred Texts, where wrath is threatned to all unconverted Sinners, continuing fuch. So that in plain English, thy trust in God is no move than a wretched prefumption, that he will be so merciful as to break his word to fave thee; and if indeed this word prove false, then thy confidence will not deceive thee; but if it prove true, as for certainit will, then woe be to thee, for all this pretended trull. PORT

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And of the very fame stamp is thy reliance on Christ whilft thou rebellest against him. For tell me, prithee. does the Gospel say, that every man who shall believe that Christ will save him, shall be saved by him, let his heart & life be what it will. I am fure neither Christ nor his Apostles ever made known such a doctrine: And if thy faith be grounded upon any other Gospel than Christ hath revealed, thou art like to go feek another Heaven than that he hath promised. For he bath told thee plainly, that without boliness thou shalt never see the Lord; that he is the author of Salvation, only to those that obey bim; and that he takes off condemnation from none but fuch who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Now if thou doft truly believe in Christ, thou wilt fet thy felf to feek for happiness in the way that he hath appointed, not in one of thy own deviling: for else it is a fign thou dost not depend upon him for falvation; but on thy own fancy or Satan's delufions, or whoever it is whose directions thou followest rather than Christs. It thou wast in a place where two ways meet, and one man should bid thee follow him in this way, and another should bid thee follow him in the contrary way, if thou would'st come to thy journeys end: is it not plain that thou believst him whom thou followest? Or if thou hadft fome dangerous disease, and an able Physician should tell thee, that if thou would'st depend upon him, by the help of God he would recover thee, and shou'd leave with thee such and such Physick to take; if in the mean time thou should'if take a conceit, that thou mightest be well without following his advice, and some one else should direct thee to an easier and cheaper way, whereupon thou throwest away his Medicines, do'll thou then depend upon this Physician for a cure? Thus the Lord Jefus, the great Physician of Souls, aflures thee, if thou wilt depend on, and trust thy self with

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with him, or believe in him, he will keep thee from that everlasting death whereof thou art in danger; and to this purpose he sends his Word and Spirit to cure thee of thy ignorance and wickedness, which is the disease of thy Soul, he would bring thee to Repentance, and thoroughly purifie and fanctifie thy heart : but thou think'it this a tedious course, and wilt by no means submit to it come on it what will , but fanciest thou may's be faved without so much ado, and that for sooth by reliance on Christ. Is not this a very wise business, to rely on the Physician for health, and throw away the Physick that should procure it? I know well enough what thou would'it have, Christ shall keep thee from Hell, but yet by all means he must give thee liberty to live in fin; that is, he must let thee carry fire in thy bosome, but yet he must keep thee from being burnt; he must let thee drink poyson, but yet he must keep it from griping thy bowels. But believe it, Christ came not into the world for any suchends. This he hath purchas'd that no fins, great or small, shall damn that man that's truly humbled for, and forfakes them, and depends upon him for a pardon, and is made holy in heart and life: but not, that he who lives and delights in fin should escape misery, which is indeed a kind of Impossibility. For man is in bondage, and fin is his fetters; now the Son would make us free, he would fet the Captive at liberty, but must he not then take off his fetters? We are polluted, fin is our filth, Christ is the fountain opened for our cleanling : and can we be clean if we will not be purged from our filthiness? We are Slaves to Satan through our lusts, by which he leads us whither he will; Christ would deliver us from this slavery, but must be not then break these chains? Sin is the Spa wn or Seed, Hell is the fruit and off-spring, and if the Seed be permitted to grow, must there not needs be the fruit? And this

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this shews how man plainly destroys himself, whilst he will hug his lusts which are a Serpent in his bosome, prefuming that for all that, they will not sting him. Man by his fins had deferved everlasting wrath, Christ came to fave him from fin, and fo from wrath: and if men will not believe he came to this purpose, or will not improve him in order thereto, must they not needs die in their fins, and fo abide under that wrath which was before upon them, and which still follows after fin , Fobn 8. 24. and 3.36. Acts 4. 12. Ignorance of God is one part as well as cause of mans unhappiness, and if men wilfully close their eyes, that the light which Christ brings to the world can have no entrance, must they not of necessity remain in darkness? Excessive love to our Bodies, and to the comforts of this life which we shall be stript of, and want of delight in God, and his holy service, is the great misery of a foul, and doth engage it in those strikes with it's Maker, that cast men into an hell upon earth, and kindle the unquenchable fire : and if they will not give way the Spirit of Christ, to turn the bent and inclination of their hearts from the World to God, do they not retain their own certain misery? Thus thou seest how impossible it is, even in the thing it self, for all rejecters of Christ to escape damnation, supposing they are but continued in being, and left to themselves; both which, Scripture affures us, will befall the impenitent in the future state. But know moreover, to the breaking of thy heart in time, thy condemnation is like to be much more heavy for thy rejecting of Christ, than it would have been, if he had never come into the world, or had never offered mercy to thee. Canst thou in thy own Conscience think, that thou who hast been so importuned and begg'd by so many arguments, to accept of Christ, shalt escape as easily as they that never heard

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of him, or but very darkly? Shall not he that abuseth ten Talents be more severely dealt with, than he who hides but one? why else does Christ denounce such woes against Chorazin and Beth faida, threatning them with worse punishments than Sodom and Gomorrab? Was it not because they enjoy'd more mercies and greater means for Repentance? Do we not read. Heb. 12.25. that they who refuse to hear the Son speaking from beaven, shall much less escape, than they who refused to bear the Prophets of old? And of a forer punishment whereof they are worthy? Heb. 10. 29. Though I would not have thee neglect the means whilft there is any hope, yet let mo tell thee, it had been better for thee to have never heard one word of the way to Salvation by Jesus Christ, than having heard, to slight and difregard it. Every Sermon thou haft heard, every Book thou haft read, and every Exhortation thou haft had, and neglected, will fink thee so much the lower into Hell. These very Lines which thou art now reading, if they be not improved, will, without repentance, be remembred to thy fmart another day. Be thou well and fured, though God be the Father of mercies and a God of bowels, yet he takes account of the mercies he affords his Creatures, and takes notice how they improve them: and if they be abused, they shall be severely reckoned for. God will not be mocked by rebellious Creatures, nor shall his precious gifts be trod under feet, and they that do fuch things escape unpunished. Above all then, how will the love of Christin dying for them make their doom more fad, if they be not con-Grained by this love. What torments can be great enough for the ingratitude and perverseness of such? If thou, Reader, be one of them, I dare appeal to thy felf, whether thou defervest not, for thy unbelief and impenitency, greater sufferings than if Christ had never

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died. For suppose there was a Traitor, who for his Treafon being condemned to die, the King's own Son should be content to have his right hand cut off (to fatisfie the Law, and terrifie the people from the like guilt hereafter) that he might obtain a pardon of his Father for this poor man; and when he had got it, should come and tell him what he had done, affuring him, that if he will but take him for his deliverer, relinquish all his traiterous defigns, and become a good Subject, he shall not only have a pardon, but be taken into the Court, and there live in the greatest favour and honour: but suppose he, when he hath heard all, instead of a thankful acceptance of his pardon upon these conditions, should kick at the hand that offers it, and turn his back upon him with contempt, asking him, who wish'd him to trouble himfelf for him? Nay, worse than this, suppose, whilst the Prince is holding forth his Pardon, he should endeavour with a Knife that he had got to stab him to the heart. would'ft thou not think that fuch a Wretch deferved the greatest tortures that could be devised? And more for this his latter obstinacy than for his first tre ason? And if thou be found guilty of the very fame, yea worse perfidiousness and ingratitude against God thy Maker. and Jesus Christ thy Redeemer, will not thy own Conscience conclude it most just, that the heaviest judgments should be thy portion? Wast thou not liable to death, to all kind of misery for thy sin? Did not the Son of God humble himself to take on him thy nature? and then to die a most shameful cursed death to purchase thy pardon? and yet when he offers it upon condition of thy acceptance of him for thy Saviour, and becoming a faithful Subject to the Soveraign Majesty. thou art so far from being brought to this, that thou rather takest encouragement from this mercy held forth by Christ in the Gospel, to continue in disobedience to

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God, than which thou could strot offer a greater injury to thy Saviour to make him as it were a patron of thy wickedness, doing far worse than they that crucified him, whilst thou indeavourest quite to pervert and take away the end of his Death, which was to redeem us from all iniquity, and purishe unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. And if indeed this be thy case, canst thou say one word in thy own excuse, why all the plagues that are prepared for rebellious sinners should not be poured out upon thee, who thus

scornest and abusest thy compassionate Saviour?

By this time, I hope, thou art convinced, that there is abundant reason why thou shouldest accept of the Lord Jesus Christ, to bring thee to the salvation he hath prepared for his people, in that way which he himself That thou mightest not want arguhath prescribed. ments of all forts, I have plainly told thee what's like to come of thy obstinate refusal. And now after all I again demand of thee, whether thy heart be brought thus thoroughly to consent, that Christ shall be thy Saviour and take his own way with thee, to keep thee from mifery, and bring thee to true bleffedness? Art thou refolved to give up thy felf to him, and follow his directions, or not? Shall all that hath been faid, do nothing to incline thee thereto? Do'ff thou think it better to be commanded to go from Christ hereafter, than to come to him at his command for falvation here? Canst thou bear his heaviest indignation rather than his easy yoke and light burden? Is there any thing in becoming Christ's faithful Servant worse than being the Devil's everlasting bond flave? Bethink thy felf whilft thou haft leifure, and cease not these thoughts, till thou arivest to a true sense of the things that concern thee, and at length art firmly refolved, without any more baffling or dallying, to bind thy self over to Christ by a firm Covenant, to be wholly

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his never to depart from him, but in all things fincerely to comply with him, and be guided by him, that thou mayft escape the vengeance thy fins have exposed thee to, and obtain that Glory to which he will affuredly bring thee. This is that Covenant with Christ, or faith in him, which I have been all this while perswading thee to: wherein I told thee is contained thy Covenant with God the Father, to love and honour him above all, asthy Maker, Ruler, and End; and with the Holy Ghost, to be sanctified and led by him. Which Covenant every man must be cordially entred into, that he may be fit to partake of the Lord's Supper, whereby he doth profess to confecrate himself to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: that is, to be a true Christian, as by his Baptism he stands engaged. And this is the third qualification which is requilite to all Communicants. And if I should name no more, hence it may sufficiently appear who is fit to come to this Ordinance; even he that being acquainted with the Doctrine of the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ, believes all that is there related to be true, and is sensible of, and deeply humbled for all his fins, being fedfastly resolved, by Gods affistance. presently from this time forward to forsake them, and is unfeignedly willing to receive the Lord Jesus, to be his Saviour, upon the terms of the Gospel, that is (as I thall next speak particularly) he that relies upon him alone for the pardon of his fins, and is willing to be fanctified by his holy Spirit, that he may be made fit for an everlasting communion with God, upon whom he hath placed his highest love. This is the man whom Christ will bid welcome to his Table. Wherefore, Reader, if this be a description of the state of thy Soul, let not Satan or thy own fearful misgiving heart perswade thee, that thou art unfit to partake of the pmviledges held forth to Believers: but with a cheerful boldboldness address thy self to this Feast, which thy gracious Lord hath appointed for thy refreshment and strengthening, till be take thee to himself into his heaven.

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Since I have already thus far discovered, what kind of persons Communicants ought to be, from the nature of this Ordinance, as it is for a Remembrance of Christ and his Death, which cannot be without the knowledge of him, repentance for sin, and believing in him, I may therefore be briefer in the particulars that follow, in shewing what more is included in Remembring Christ at the Sacrament, since they serve but farther to illustrate and confirm what I have already mentioned concerning the qualifications of the Receivers, and since I may repeat some of them in directing those that intend to Communicate.

pear who is fit to come to this Ordinance, even he that being acquainted with IV. **TAHO** of the Cofnel con-

IV. Aright Remembring the benefits procured for usby

Illouted pame no more, honce it may he ficently ap-

He that remembers Christ's death as he ought, can not but remember what were the benefits purchast his Death for those that believe in him: which benefits are held forth and represented in the Sacrament, and by it conveyed and assured to the worthy Receivers, and do call for suitable dispositions and affections in them, as I shall shew particularly. Of these benefits I shall name three which are the principal, and contain all the rest; And these are Justification, Sanctification, and Glarification.

difference betwixt them is so small, that I shall here

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take no notice of it) which pardon Christ hath obtained by the fatisfaction he made to divine justice, by his perfect obedience and grievous sufferings, for the fake whereof, Believers are releast from the rigour and curse of the Law, received into the favour of God, and preferved from those miseries which otherwise had according to their desert befaln them, Gal. 2. 1. Christ hatb redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. Heb. 1. 3. When he had by himself purged our fins, Oc. Heb. 9. 26 .- But now he hath appeared to put away in by the facrifice of himself. Rom. 2. 23, 24. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justifed freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in fe-(se Christ : with multitudes of the like places. And the Bread and Wine fet apart for the Sacrament, do reprefent Christ's Body that was given and broken for us, Luk. 12. 19. I Cor. 11. 24. and his Blood which was shed to procure our pardon, as you may read expresly, Mar. 26. 27, 28. And he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of fins; that is, this Wine doth signifie and represent my Blood, in which the New Covenant betwixt God and Man is founded and estabished, and by which remission of sins, and all other consequent benehts of this New Testament or Covenant are purchas'd. And those Sacramental Actions of giving and receiving the Bread and Wine to eat and drink it, do hold forth and confirm the mutual Covenant betwixt God and Man. As it feals to the Covenant on Man's part, (that: he will receive Christ as he is offered, and be devoted to him, and to God by him) I have spoken to it under the foregoing Head; and to all who fincerely do thus, God hereby seals to them, that he will be their God, reconciled to them through his Son; and that Christ with K 2

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all his benefits shall be theirs; and therefore as one principal benefit, that all their inquities for Christ's Take shall be forgiven them. Even as the Minister, who is here in God's stead, offers them the Bread and Wine, whereby a crucified Christ, with the bleffings he purchas'd, are fignified, fo doth God make over all these to a believing Soul, which doth as really and truly, though in a ipiritual manner, receive Jesus Christ, by consenting to take him for his Lord and Saviour, as with his hand he takes, and with his mouth eats, and drinks the Bread and Wine. Now in answer to that particular priviledge, pardon of fin, which hereby is affured to us, there is required in us a dependance upon Christ for this pardon; that is, an expectation and hope, that God for his Son's fake will pardon our fins, that they shall not be charged upon us, to condemn us at the great judgment day, but that we shall then be cleared from all accusations, and secured from those miseries into which the ungodly shall be sentenced; and this we are to look upon as fealed to us by the Sacrament. Andit is to be considered, that this dependance upon Christ for a pardon, is one part, or an effect of our faving taithin him: for they who believe that he is the Redeemer of the world, and are willing to be faved by him from their wickedness, and so from hell, they will rely on him to obtain forgiveness by him, and according to the knowledge they have of their repentance and Faith, the conditions of this mercy, they will the more confidently expect it. But as it is often times difficult to bring the truest Believers to this act of Faith, in that measure as may give them comfort, fort is more difficult to beat the most negligent out of this refuge, who would cheat themselves with a concert, that to hope for mercy through Christ is all that's required of them. But know, the pardon which God offers is upon condione

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condition of our willingness to accept of Christ to teach and guide, to fanctifie and faveus, which I have oft mentioned, as that believing in Christ which the Gospel calls for, and entails salvation upon : and then they in whom this willingness is wrought, are bound to believe, that all God's promises, made to such as by his Grace they find themselves to be, shall be fulfill'd: and therefore particularly they ought to believe, that according to his promise, he will blot out all their transgressions, for his sake who was bruised for them; and upon the strength or weakness of this perswasion doth their comfort very much depend, though not their fafety so much, fince the want of it commonly proceeds from an ignorance of themselves, rather than an unbehef of the promises: to which I shall say something hereafter, least any should think they must not come to the Sacrament, because they have not a confident perfwasion that their fins shall be pardoned, and therefore think they have no Faith. Now from what hath been faid, it farther appears, That none but penitent Believers are worthy Receivers : for to fuch , and none but fuch , doth God in the Covenant of Grace promise pardon, and therefore to them only it is that he conveys and affures it by the Sacrament, which is a Seal of that Covenant, and ratifies no more than what that promifeth. And indeed none but such do in good earnest desire or feek after a pardon: for none but they are foundly convinced of their need of it, by reason of their breach of that Law which doth accuse and condemn them. Ignorant senseless sinners, that run on desperately in their wicked courses, without any thought or fear of those judgments that are ready to be executed upon them, and never take to heart how they have incenfed the Divine Majesty against them, do not use much to busie their thoughts how they should turn away this

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wrath, and prevent this misery. The fear of sickness poverty, difgrace, or the like temporal evils, doth much more take them up than the fears of Hell, and accordingly their daily care is to avoid those rather than this He that is fick prizes the Physician, whilst he that is in health, or thinks he is fo, cares little for him, or his Medicines. A poor pisoner that hath newly heard the fentence of condemnation from the Judges mouth and knows he's a dead man in Law, what would not he do to get a pardon from the King? Or oh how thankful would he be to the man that should do it for him? whilst another that knows not himself to be guilty (though he may be really fo) would take himfelf little beholden to any one that should make him such an offer, to wit, of the King's pardon. Even thus should you come to a stupid Sinner, and be able to assure him that God was reconciled to him, he would be very little moved with the tidings, for this is not a matter whereof he used to make much doubt, or greatly concern himfelf one way or other: but could you furprize him with the news of a great Estate being fallen to him, oh what an extalie of joy would you call the poor man into; I confess when these careless ones come to be awakened on a death-bed, or by a fit of fickness, then they do indeed earnestly desire, that their fins may be forgiven them. Notwithstanding the great affection they had to the Devil's drudgery, they have no mind to receive the wages which he affords them. Though they have loved fin to well, that they would never part with it whilft they could keep it, yet fince now they can keep it no longer, by no means are they willing to go to that Hell to which their fins directly led them. Loth they are to take leave of their lusts, till they come to the very mouth of the Grave, but then fain they would rid their hands of them: for they know, if they go together one step

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flep farther they are like to rue it for ever. Whilft they could tast the pleasures of sin they wallowed securely in it, but now fickness hath spoil'd their taste, and put them out of temper, they feem somewhat more indifferent to it: but especially searing lest they have already had all the fweetness, and that nothing but bitter dregs are at the bottom of the cup, therefore now at length they would throw it out of their hand. And this I fear is ordinarily the best of a Death-bed Repentance. which many build their hopes fo much upon. They may be in good earnest afraid of being damned, and therefore are forry that they have brought themselves into fuch danger: but what's this to an ingenuous forrow for having offended a good and gracious God, and to a loathing of fin for its own vileness? which are necesfary to make our repentance right. And not onely at death, its like, but in time of health alfo, there are many who would be very willing to have their fins pardoned, if it might be, upon any other condition than forfaking them. If bare confession and begging of mercy might serve turn, or if coming to the Sacrament might serve turn, and yet still they might live as they lift, few would go without a pardon. But remember, God no where affures pardon to any man absolutely, but upon a certain condition, which except we perform, we cannot look for the promised mercy. What this condition is, I have before told you, even that you should repent of, and give diligence to forfake all fin, and receive Christ to be your perfect Saviour: upon no other terms therefore expect to have Pardon confirmed to you by the Sacrament, which will no farther avail you than as it receives power and efficacy from the promife, without which it is a feal to a blank Paper that will warfant you to claim nothing. Suppose a Landlord should make you a Leafe of an House, upon condition that K 4

you would own your self his Tenant, and yearly pay him some small quit-rent, and should set his Seal to this Lease, all this would stand you in no stead, if you denied that you was his Tenant, and refuse to pay the Rent he required. Wherefore to know whether your hope of pardon be upon good grounds, and such as will not fail you, examine whether you are such kind of persons as I have before described, whether you are humbled for, and brought out of love with every sin, and do with

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firm purpose of beant cleaveto the Lord Jesus.

To bring you thus to depend upon Christ for a pardon, in a right manner, and upon fure grounds, the confiderations I laid down under the last particular may be of use, fince this is one part of that faith in Christ, which I there exhorted you to; that was an acceptance of him in all his Offices; this hath a peculiar respect to his Priestly Office, and is called Faith in his blood, Rom. 2. 25. Onely to add a word or two more, for the quickning of all fuch who have not much laid it to heart, how to get their fins pardoned, as if they thought it was a thing of no great consequence: Consider, I beseech you, whether the Incarnation, Life and Death of Christ was not a matter of huge importance to the world? and tell me, Reader, dost not think thou art as much concerned herein as any other man? Had'st not thou as much need of his Death as any? And therefore doth it pot stand thee upon, to see whether thou sharest in the benefits of it as much as it doth any man breathing? And tell me farther, if all this preparation in the Gofpel had been made for thee only, and Christ had come down from heaven, and suffered on the Cross for thy fake alone, that thou mightest be faved by him on the fame terms that now thou may'ft; and should have fent thee a Message, calling thee by thy particular name, affuring thee of all this, and befeeching thee to accept

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of these offers of life: dost thou think all this would have convinced thee of the greatness of Divine love, and of thy need of mercy? And would it have awakened thee to make out after the same, and to do all that was required to obtain it? If so, why then wilt thou not be perswaded to the same care? Since the Gospel speaks to thee as particularly as if it named thee; and the mercy is as great, and thy need of it as much as if thou alone wast concerned in it; and thou shalt never have the less benefit, nay rather more, by having others to share with thee in it: but thy misery, if thou miss of a pardon, will be never the less, for having many companions in the same sad case with thy self.

Once again let me ask thee, thou who now art fo insensible of thy need of a pardon, that thou wilt not take pains to get it in the way thou art commanded, wouldest thou be contented on any rates, absolutely and exprefly to part with all hopes and expectations of it? If thou might'st be hired with a thousand or ten thousand pounds, would'it thou for fuch a fum of money, profess thou didst renounce all right and title to Jesus Christ, and all hopes of mercy through him? Or would'st thou give this under thy hand in writing to the Devil, or to any man that would help thee to a great Estate? what would'st thou think of those who should do thus? would'st thou not look upon them as most wretched forlorn creatures? Why, be it known to thee. if through negligence and stupidity thou seek not out after an interest in Christ, that thou mayst be pardoned and faved by him, thy condition will at length be found as miserable as theirs. If there should be certain acres of ground in Ireland, promised to any one that would go thither to possess them, he that would not take the pains to go over, would have no more advantage by them

them, than he that should formally renounce his right thereto: even so by carelesness and sloth mayst thou lose all benefit by Christ, as certainly as those poor creatures that are drawn to make compacts with the Devil, and sell away their Souls for a thing of nought.

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To conclude, if nothing I have hitherto faid will move thee, consider, I entreat thee, whether this thy undervaluing of pardoning mercy will remain always. Sins thou haft, I know thou wilt acknowledge, yea, many and great fins, fuch as would fink thee to the lowest hell if they be laid to thy charge. Do'ft thou not grant this? And thou canst not but know, that there will at length come a day of Reckoning for these thy fins: and dost thou think when thou must stand before the Judge, and give up thy account, that thou shalt not earnestly defire a pardon then? will it then feem as indifferent a thing as now it does? Then, I say, when without it thou must be sentenced to keep company with the Devils in the midst of scorching flames, for ever and ever And thou canst not fure be so ignorant as not to know, that none shall have a pardon then but those who got it now: that's a day for examining, and declaring what our estates are, whether good or bad, that we may be dealt with accordingly, not a time for getting them made better, if they were nought before. Wherefore if thou beest not a very Brute, only to mind what is before thee; if thou halt any forelight, any belief of this Judgment day that thou art going to, now rouse up thy felf and with all speed and industry labour to get that pardon, which within a while, to thy own most lively fense will be so needful, and stand thee in so much flead. "And when thou art wrought to fuch a fight of thy mifery as makes thee delire after mercy, and to fuch a loathing of thy fins as fits thee for it, then thou may the affored, that God for Christ's fake will be gracious

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gracious to thee, and thou mayst comfortably address thy self to the Sacrament, and take it as a farther assurance from God, that his promises of mercy shall be made good to thee.

CHAP. VII.

The second benefit is Sanctification.

THE second great benefit purchas'd by the Death of Christ, and held forth in the Sacrament, is Sanctifying, Saving Grace, for the enlivening and frengthening the Souls of Believers. There is no truth more plain in the whole Gospel, than that one great end of Christ's Death was, to obtain from the Father, that the holy Spirit should accompany the proclaiming of the Gospel, to enlighten the minds and soften the hearts of those who should not wilfully resist his workings, that they might entertain the truth in the love thereof; and that on these, greater measures of grace should be poured forth, to make them in all things conformable to their Maker, according to the capacity of their natures: which was the great delign of the Redeemer, even to reftore Apostate creatures to the image of God wherein they were created, that so they might be made meet for his service here, and the fruition of him hereafter. A most lamentable mistake it is to confine Christ's death only to the procuring of a pardon, and keeping finners out of Hell, fince this was but in order to a work of grace on their hearts, and only fuch who submit to this work shall at last have a share in the absolute pardon. For suppose a company of Prisoners were taken in War, who being weak and wounded, cannot return into their own Countrey, but must pre-

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fently be put to death by the King that took them; and in the mean time comes their own Prince, and pays a great fum to obtain, that the execution of them may be put off for some time, and that his Physician may use medicines, and apply plaisters to as many as are willing, and that all fuch, when they are made whole, shall be fent to their own homes: and the rest who will not be ruled by the Physician, but spit out his potions, because they are bitter, and throw away his plaisters, because they make them fmart, they are to remainin their prison, and be put to death as they were sentenced. Here we see the ransom that was paid, was first to stop the flaughter of the prisoners, and to get liberty to use means for their recovery to health and foundness; and fecondly to obtain, that the recovered should be fet free to return to their own countrey? and not onely the contempt of the ransome, but of the Phylician, would bring Death. Thus had we by the Fall, both brought our selves into danger of present destruction, and disabled our Souls, that we could not return to that state whence we fell; but the Son of God undertaking our Redemption, obtained for us, that the sentence of condemnation should not speedily be executed, and that there should be affured hopes of escaping destruction, and returning to happines, for all those who make not their condition desperate, by continuance in fin, and rejecting of the cure which his Spirit would work upon them: now the work of his Spirit is to plant and increase grace in their hearts, to heal the diseases, and remove the weakness which sin bath caused, that they may be enabled to walk in the ways of holinesto their everlasting rest; and the sending forth of his healing Spirit was the fruit of his blood: Now as it will affuredly damn men to despise the blood of Christ, asis it was of no torce to be a ranfom, nor to attain those ends

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ends for which the Gospel saith it was shed, so is it as dangerous and damnable to refift and flight the Spirit of Christ, let them pretend what esteem they will for his blood. A like mistake also it is, flowing from the former, to limit the notion of free grace to meer pardoning mercy, when as it includes fanctifying Grace alfo: for in the instance now given, the Physick I hope was a free gift to the prisoners, as the ransom that was paid for them, notwithstanding this was without them, and the other to betaken into them. And in like manner is the giving of the Spirit into us, as purely from the grace and mercy of God (though merited by Christ) as the giving of his Son for us, & accepting of us for his fake. This I was willing to hint, least any when they hear or read of being faved by Free grace, should dream of a Salvation to be had by a meer pardon, without being fanctified by the Spirit.

That the making men holy in their hearts and lives was a principal end of Christ's Death, without which no happiness is to be attained, is, I say, a truth so evident in the very tenour of the Gospel, that it may seem needless to produce particular proofs; yet amongst the rest read these few, Epb. 2. 10. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, &c. Eph. 5. 25, 16.17. - Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it. that he might fan stiffe and cleanse it, &c. and that it might be boly and without blemish, 1 Joh. 3. 8. The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil. 1 Pet. 3. 14. Who bare our fins -- that we being dead to fin should live unto righteousness. Tit. 3. 4, 5, 6. -According to his mercy be faved us, by the walking of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which be shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Read also Math. 1.22. Luke. 1.7, 5. Rom. 6. 11. Gal. 1. 4. Tit. 2. 12.13, 14. Heb. 9. 14. Now though lacknowledge it is by the help of the Spirit, that we are brought to be-

lieve: for faith it felf is the gift of God, Eph. 2.8. yet I think we shall ordinarily find the promises of the Spirit to be made to those who are already Believers. to advance and carry on the work of God upon their Souls. And to this end, and of this nature is that Grace which is fignified and given forth by the Sacrament? even to refresh and nourish the Souls of Believers, to confirm and increase those Graces that are wrought in them, and to bring them forward to farther degrees of perfection. And thus much the very Elements themfelves do teach us: for as Bread is the support and stay of life, and wine that which makes glad the heart of man. and both are needful for the maintaining of life, and inincreasing our strength, so are the Body and Blood of Christ alike necessary and useful to our Souls: for he himself hath told us, that his flesh is meat indeed, and bis blood is drink indeed, and that be who eats his flesh and drinks his Blood dwelleth in him, and hath eternal life. with much more to the same purpose, John 6. The proper meaning whereof, as will appear by the Context, and the occasion of that Discourse, I suppose, is, That they who believe in him, having the same expectations of spiritual life from him, that they have of temporal life from their food, and accordingly receive, digeft, and improve his doctrine, hoping for remission of sins through his Blood, giving entertainment to his Spirit, and are filled and fed with those graces which he gives out, that all fuch shall live for ever. And then in a fecondary fense, these words may be applyed to the Sacrament; fo far as this faith in Christ, whereby grace is expected and derived from him, is here particularly asted: for thus he who in the Sacrament eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Christ hath eternal life; that is, he who comes with that fitness of Soul as to be made partaker of the bleffings and mercies hereby prefented, and

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and earnestly desires, that of Christs fulness he may receive suitable supplies of Grace. To the same purpose feems the Apostle to speak, 1 Cor. 10. 16,17. The Cup of Bleffing which we blefs, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the Bread which we break is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? For we being many members are one body. As if he should have said, Hereby we have a communion with Christ himself, we profess our relation to, and interest in him; and the benefits which come by him are communicated to us who truly believe in him; his Spirit is diffused and shed abroad up on us, and thereby we, who make up one mystical body, whereof he is the Head, being united and ingrafted into him, as members do live by him, being acted and upheld by that life and vigour which he gives and continues to us.

Since then here is Spiritual food, fanctifying Grace held forth and communicated to Souls rightly disposed. this farther informs us what kind of persons Communicants ought to be. The dispositions of Soul particularly fuited to this benefit are, I. An earnest desire after grace to be given in, and 2. A resolution to improve this grace received. Hither Christians are to come earnestly longing to have communion with Christ himself, who is not onely the Master of the Feast but the very food whereupon the Believer lives; and this communion we have by his liberal communications of the graces of his. Spirit to necessitous Souls. This desire of Grace is that which is fignified by those expressions of bungring and thirling; which we so often meet with in Scripture; answerable to which the Spiritual things desired are represented by things to be eaten and drank, as by Bread, Meat, Milk, Water, and Wine. And they are here shadowed forth under the Elements of Bread and Wine, and must be hungered after by all that come to

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this Ordinance: which teacheth us: that none are fit to come . that have not already received fuch beginnings of grace, as may cause them to long for more; who have not fuch a spiritual life wrought in them, as may put them upon care to have this life supported and increas'd. None can feel hunger but they that live: none can defire after greater measures of Grace, who have not in some fort known and tafted the sweetness and excellency thereof. But no humble Souls need therefore be difcouraged, at if they were not worthy to feast at this Table, where none are welcome but fuch as have true Grace wrought in them, fince they may be confident of their acceptance, if they can really find in themselves an appetite to the provisions made for them, an hearty and fincere desire, that their Spiritual wants may be fupplied, their weakness strengthened, and all their distempers healed: and what true Christian, whose Grace is never fo low, but finds in himself a love to, and a longing after more? But this indeed condemns thole who feel no need of any nourishment for their Souls and therefore either wholly neglect Sacraments, and other means whereby it is to be had, or else come with out any stomach at all, and content themselves with the shell and outside of the duty, which will never feed them. These full Souls, that loath the Honey-combe are like to be fent empty away, whilst the hungry only shall be filled with good things. Now to such sickly, liftless Souls, that even nauseate the most wholsome food, I would fay fomething briefly in order to their cure, to bring them so far into frame that they may come with quickned appetites, and enlarged defires to the Lord's Table, as perceiving there are fuch good things here to be had, which they do most of all stand

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empty creatures you are: for till then you are not like to feek out for a supply. Consider, I mean, chiefly how destitute you are by nature, and to this very day, of that which is the true riches, the beauty and dignity of the Soul, in that you are so unlike to God, so full of corruption and wickedness, so empty of that Spiritual wisdome, that holiness, humility, heavenly-mindedness, and the like excellencies, which alone can render you amiable in the fight of your Maker. You cannot imagine, if you have well studied your own hearts, that you brought into the world with you, all that Grace which is of absolute necessity, to perfect and accomplish your Natures; and it is too fad a fign you are still without it, whilstyou have no more mind to those means which God hath ordained for the conveyance and increase of it. How happy a thing now was it, if you were but throughly convinced of your own wants; when you do but perceive you need food, or rayment. or Physick, how industrious and impatient are you till you have one way or other got what you would have? And thus ardently defirous would you be after the Graces of God's Spirit, if you did rightly apprehend, that these are the food, and cloathing, and Physick of the Soul. But alas, how do people generally labour under the fortishness, and self-conceitedness, which was charged upon the Laodicean Church, that thought ber felf rich increas'd with goods needing nothing, and knew not that the was wretched and miferable, poor & blind, and naked, Rev. 3.17. 'Tis one of the greatest difficulties in the world to bring men to judge of their poverty or riches by the temper and frame of their Souls; to convince them that they are poor and needy, whilst they are graceless, though they should overflow in wealth and abundance of all external things.

2. Wherefore in the next place, let me advise you

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to beware of a secret mistake which ruins millions, in imagining that outword comforts may ferve well enough to make amends for all your necessities; that the husks of wordly enjoyments may serve instead of the Bread that is in the Fathers house. Oh take heed of inordinate thirsting after these puddels, or of wallowing in them. Do not fo eagerly pursue such unsatisfactory trifles as carnal profits and pleasures, which divert you from the purfuit of those things that most concern you; but examine well what there is in them to do good to an immortal Soul, which you cannot but account your best part. Beware then of being so devoted to the pleasing of your flesh, that you should be thereby stupished to a regardlefness of your Soul. The luscious fare which the world affords, cloys the mind of man, and spoils his appetite, and puts him out of relish with his own most proper food. This is the undoing of the most, they are so full of the Creature, if not in their hands yet in their hearts, that they have no mind nor room, to entertain any thing of God there. Every man breathing finds himfelf a needy Creature, that cannot live upon himself, but must have something from without brought in to give him fatisfaction: but then the mifery is, they think their wants are all of that nature, that things here below may Supply them. The poor think there is nothing they need fo much as better food and raiment, more plenty and eafe and esteem in the world; and they who abound in these things, because they see others excel them, think they want such and such greater Estates and Dignities to make them happy. Though they find after all their attainments, that still they are restless, discontented, and wanting fomething elfe, they scarce know what: which might convince them, that it is onely from God they can receive fatisfaction, by having their nature perfected with those Graces which may fit them for that communion

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communion with him in love and delight, wherein the Soul of man can onely find rest and contentment. This, I fay, they might learn from those restless infinite defires of their own bearts, if they would but heedfully attend to the nature thereof: but being more cruel to themselves than any Parent to his Child, when the Soul ealls for Bread, they give it a Stone: endcavouring to put it off with those things that concern the body alone, whilst that within them, which is most needy, still remains so, and is suffered to pine and starve. As if an hungry man should fill his mouth with meat, and let nothing down into his Stomach. Whilft you are fondly endeavouring to quiet your minds, and accomplish your felves with any thing that is without your Souls, be itriches, pleasures, honours, friends, and all the accommodations of the outward man, which the World most dotes upon, you are as verily besotted and deceived, as he thinks to ease a violent pain at his heart with putting on a rich Suit of Cloaths; or to supply the want of enlivening Blood and Spirits by painting his Your necessities and diseases are deep and inward; your very Souls are out of order, and nothing in the World will do you any good, but what gets within you, and changes your apprehensions, delires and affections, and makes you quite other persons than now you are. Wherefore I would beg you to fix this truth deep into your minds, That fince you are become poor and maked through the loss of Gods Image, which was the riches and beauty of the reasonable creature, it's never like to be well with you, till you be again restored to his Image: which is by being brought to the knowledge and love of him, to an universal submission, and exact conformity to his will.

3. And when you are brought to this knowledge of your wants, and the nature of them, then consider well, that it is by fessis Christ alone that you can be satisfied and

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Supplied. The Law was given by Moses, but by him comes grace and truth, 1 John 1. 17. He is the Mediator. through whom, and for whose sake we receive from God whatever our Souls stand in need of. He by his death hath purchas'd all things necessary for our salvanon; he is ascended on high, and hath received Gifts for his People. As King and Head of his Church, he communicates to his Members those Graces, that by his death and intercession he hath obtained for them, and they are replenish'd with the fulness of him who filleth all in all. And then you are to take notice, that Christ hath appointed duties to be performed by us, and fet up Ordinances, which we are diligently to attend upon, and by his Spirit accompanying them, he conveys Grace to the hearts of those that are conscionable in theuse of these means. Such are hearkening to, and meditating upon the Word, Joh. 17.17. Sanctifie them by thy truth, thy word is truth; I Pet. 2. 2. As new-born Babes defire the sincere Milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. And Prayer to the Father in his name, John 14.13. Luke 11. 13. - How much more will your heavenly Father give the Spirit to those that ask him; Jam. 1. 5. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Such also is the Sacrament of Baptisme, being duly improved; Gal. 3. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; Rom. 6. 2, 4. 1 Pet. 3.21. And lastly, this receiving of the Lord's Supper, which is our feeding upon Christ who is the Paschal Lamb facrificed for us, and herein to Believers, in a Spiritual sense, is afforded a Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, as we may find in the Apostle's words before mentioned. And when you have but arrived to a fense of your own indigence, and Christ's fulness suitable thereto, there will necessarily arise in you, desires aftera partiparticipitation of that fulness, which will bring you to, and prepare you for those Ordinances, wherein these

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Lastly, I would advise you to beware, of ever entertaining a conceit, that you are become fofull now, that you need nothing: for that's a plain fign you are poor and know it not; your Stomachs are filled with Wind inflead of folid meat. And whilst you are puft up with this felf-conceit, you will be hindred from feeking after what you really want. He that thinks his Barns full when they are empty, may through this miltake first live in idleness, and after come to beggarv. He that dreams of fuch perfection, as makes all helps Christ hath appointed needless to him, neither knows himself, nor considers what a God he hath to serve, nor what a Law he hath given him to walk by: It's much to be feared, that he who thinks he hath Grace enough, hath yet got no faving Grace at all. He that knows enough is very ignorant, he that's humble enough is still exceeding proud, and so of the rest. For he that bath tasted that the Lord is gracious, longs after fuller commuaion with him. He that drinks of the Water Christ gives, though his fickly thirst after Creatures will be cured, yet will fuch a thirst after more of Christ arise in him, as will never be quench'd, till he be drench'd into the Ocean of grace and joy. Wherefore study thy self, study the duty of this whole present state, wherein we are enjoyn'd to grow in grace, and learn hence fo much humility, so much wisdom, as to own thy necessities, and not to go about to cover them, for they will not always be hid; but rather use all means to supply them whilst aid fomething they are afforded.

And as there is required in all Receivers an earnest longing after sanctifying Grace, which is here vouchfased; so the other qualification suitable hereto, I told

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you is a Resolution to improve this grace; that is to lay ! out, and show forth the fruit of it in an holy conversation. This is an effect of the former, and indeed neces. farily flows from the nature of Grace, which is no way desirable but for use and exercise: nor is it possible that it should ordinarily lie still in the heart, and not be brought forth into Act, and shewn in the life. He that defires patience, humility, purity, temperance, to what purpose is it but to overcome the temptations, which he meets with in the World to the contrary vices, and to shew forth these fruits of the Spirit in his conversation, Whence it appears, that no man is worthy to come to the Lord's Table, who is not resolved by the grace of God to live an holy life, and to be led by the Spirit in all his ways. He that hath got any fin which he is refolv'd to keep, is not like to have any defire after that Grace which should mortifie and quell his sin: nor any mind to remember that Death which was to deliver us from this present evil world. He's like to be far from a right remembrance of Christ, who will not be perswaded to imitate him: for certainly that's one end of our remembring his Death, that we may thereby be drawn to follow his Example, which he gave us then as well as in his life, by his constancy, patience, charity, to his Enemies, and ready refiguation of himself to his Fathers Will. As be walked, fo ought we to walk, and from his very death may we fetch directions for our life. This resolution for holiness which I am speaking of, is indeed one branch of our Faith in Christ, being no other than our confent to take him for our King, to guide and govern us in all our thoughts, words, and actions: and therefore having faid fomething to it under that Head, as also the former of Repensance, Ishall at present pass galer fanchiyan Grace, which is bee vogavo it APHO - other qualintu jon fuitable hereto,

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CHAP. VIII.

The third benefit is eternal happiness with God.

3. THE last of those benefits which I named, obtained for us by the death of Christ, and to be remembred at the Sacrament, is eternal happiness. It is by his resurrection from the dead, and consequently by his death, that Believers have a lively hope of an inheruance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, referved in Heaven for them, 1 Pet. 3.4. It was his Blood that redeemed them to be Kings and Priests to God, Rev. 5. 9,10. He gave his Flesh for the life of the world, Joh. 6.51. By Jesus Christ God calls us to eternal Glory, I Pet. 5. 10. He opened the entrance into Paradife, which fin had shur up. It was his will not onely that they who believe in him, should be kept from the place where Satanswas, but that they should also be with him where he is, John 17. 24. This he pray'd for, this he died for; and is gone before to prepare a place for them, and keeps them here to prepare them for that place, and being ready they shall enter into the Kingdom. He receives their Spirits when they die, and will raise up their Bodies at the last day. Now their life is hid with Christ in God, and when he appears, then shall they also appear with him in glory, Coll. 3.3, 4. Be we fure then this Death of Christ cannot be remembred as it ought, if the Glory purchas'd thereby be forgotten. How can we remember a dying Christ, but withal we must call to mind, that he vanquish'd this death, is risen again and ascended into Glory, whither in due time he will exalt his People. Moreover that Covenant which is fealed to by this Sacrament, promiseth an everlasting Kingdom to Believers: and can any man forget such a benefit, even whilst he is receiving a confirmation of his right L 4 to

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to it? Again here is that Grace given out which is the pledge, the feed, the beginning and foretast of Glory; here is the Meat that endures to everlasting life: and who can forget his Journeys-end whilft he is taking food to strengthen him for his Travel? To conclude. here's a communion of Saints, which does in fome measure shadow out and signifie that perfect communion which they shall have one with another, when all the Elect shall be gathered from the four corners of the Earth, and with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob shall sit down, and for ever remain in the Kingdom of God! Now hence it appears, that the worthy receiver must be one, who hath taken the beavenly glory for his portion; who bath got a treasure above, and there placed his heart and his hopes: for none but fuch a one can with any life and raisedness remember this Glory, which is to be revealed. He that is wont to folace himfelf with the contemplation thereof, will rejoyce in every thing that hath a relation to it, much more in the remembrance of that price that was paid for it. But how can the Earthworm, whose Soul lies groveling upon the dust, bring himself to any affectionate thoughts of hidden treasures, which cannot be got into his Bags nor Coffers, which he cannot fo much as get a fight of. Nor can the swinish voluptuous finners, that feed upon none but the muddy delights of sense, take any comfort in the forethoughts of pure and spiritual pleasures, such as are prepared for exalted purified Souls. Any, whoever they be, that place their chief contentment on Earth, are not like, with any pleasure, to think of that time, when they must leave this Earth, and enter upon another state, where are no fuch sensual Enjoyments as here they blest themselves in Ignorant, narrow Souls have no heart to think of what shall be thousands and millions of years to come. These poor fordid Spirits are so glewed to the little little is the

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little trifles of the world, that they look not so high as after Crowns and Scepters which Christ hath in store for his faithful followers. And they who never took much pains to secure and clear up their evidence for Heaven, but have taken it for granted, that they must needs go thither at last, or count it an indifferent thing whether they do or not, will be far from those lively apprehensions of the greatness of that love which purchas'd it, and of the excellency of theblis it felf, which are necessary for him who can rightly remember either. Now to bring those who are yet strangers hereto, to such an apprehension of the Glory to come by Christ, that they may chuse it as their portion, and so be joyfully taken up in the expectations thereof: in one word I would desire thee, whoever thou art, that hast but so much common reason as to distinguish between good and evil, to consider well whether thou hast not a Soul as well as a Body, and whether this Soul must not remain in being and alive, when thy Body is rotting in the Earth, and whether then it doth not as much, yeainfinitely much more, concern thee to feek out for fomewhat, that may at that time make thy Soul happy, than for what may now please thy Senses. Yea, fince thou must live somewhere for ever, think whether it is not more worthy thy care, to provide for an everlasting well-being, than for the comforts of a frail short life. If thou art thus far convinced, then make an impartial fearch, whether there be any thing here below that's able to make thee perfectly happy. Thy Houses and Lands, thy Pleasures and Houours, will any, or all of these give in all that felicity which thou desirest or needelt? Are they of the same nature with thy Soul; or will they last as long as it will last; must not all thy merry days at length come to an end? And wilt thou be ever the better for all thou hast enjoy'd, when once

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it's over? Will the remembrance give thee any fatisfa-Ction? In that might wherein thy Soul shall be required of thee, what advantage wilt thou have from the goods thou had It laid up for many years? yea, or from those goods thou had'ft liv'd upon the years before? When the Earth and all its works shall be burnt up, where will all thy possessions and treasures be? If thou hast nothing to live on, but what will be turned into flames, what wilt thouthen fix upon? At that day when there shall be no marrying or giving in marriage, no Wives or Children, no Relation or Friends, whose Society will afford any fuch comfort as here it did; when the interest of Princes and great ones, whose tavour was here thy shelter and thy Pride, shall all be vanish'd, what will thy confidence in men avail thee? Examine these or any other outward prop whereon thou leanest, and fee whether it be not a broken Reed. And if so, except thou art refolved against thy own happinels, methinks thou should'st now onely make choice of that which will never give thee cause to repent what thou did'st, as all things will, but the eternal Glory which God hath promised to those that love him. But he that can once upon good grounds fay, This Heaven is mine, I shall fee the face of God with joy, and live in his love for ever, may now lead a serene and cheerful life in the midst of all occurrences; and need not to be daunted at Death it felf, but rather rejoyced, as it takes him to the possession of his treasure, wasts him to his own home. Wherefore if thou love thy life, be perswaded to aim at this highest glory: let nothing short of it content thee, think no condition hard to get it; rest not till thou hast made it as fure as thou canst that it's thine; and then having thus fixt thy end, thou mayst travel on with alacrity and speed, and take abundance of comfort in the forethoughts of thy future blifs, in using all helps afforded in thy journey to it, and in the remembrance of that precious Blood which was shed to purchase it, and by consequence wilt be fitted to celebrate the Sacrament.

CHAP. IX.

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V. It must be a thankful Remembrance.

IT is not possible that the death of Christ can be remembred as it ought, without the most bearty and unfeigned thankfulness to God, for so great and glorious a merer. Hath he the heart of a manthat can contemplate the fufferings of Christ, and the infinite unspeakable benefits thereby procured for poor finners, and not find him. felf raised to return thanks and praise to God, for his gracious dealings with mankind? This duty is fo proper to the Lord's Supper, that hence it anciently obtained the name of Eucharist, a return of thanks. Since then, every man who partakes thereof, ought to be thus truly thankful to God for his love revealed in Christ. this again acquaints us what kind of persons Communicants must be, namely, such who are capable of rendring acceptable praise to God, which doth but give farther evidence of the necessity of those qualifications before laid down. None but such as have been made sensible of the evil of fin, and of the danger they were thereby liable to, will be heartily thankful for that mercy which prevented this mifery, by purchasing and vouchfaing the forgiveness of their sins. How formal and hypocritical are his thanks like to be for Christ, who never yet faw, what need he stood in of him? Will he thank you for a Plaister that never telt himself wounded? Can he have any grateful sense of the love that pluck'd poor finners as Brands out of the fire, who never

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perecived himself in any such danger? Can he be thankful for ease and rest, who never felt his strong lusts, nor the curse of the Law and wrath of God, as any load or burden upon him? Nor can he be thankful for the Grace that was given by Christ, who had far rather keep his fins, than be renewed and fanctified. Little thanks wilt he return for the light who is but diffurbed and troubled with it, and so far ashamed by it, that he cannot pursue his wicked designs with that freedome and eagerness as he could before whilst he was more in the dark, where he had still rather remain. How can he thank God for Grace, who rejects and despiseth it? For being taken out of the snares of the Devil, who wilfully fastens himself into them? Will he praise God for liberty and ability to serve him, who saith of his fervice, what a weariness is it? and thinks it would be better for if him he might live as he lift, and never be put upon fo much trouble as Godliness brings along with it? Nor can he be thankful for the Glory to be had by Christ, who hath not a found perswasion of the certainty and excellency of it, and who hath not firmly resolved to take it for his portion. He that knows nothing better than bodily enjoyments, and would think himself undone was he stript of these, is like to be very cold in giving thanks for spiritual bleffings. In a word, he that is sensible of no great benefit he shall have by Christ either here or hereafter, cannot be expected to have any great measure of thankfulness for this mercy which he fo little understands. And this is the case of all unhumbled, unfanctified ones, to whom the Gospel ishid, their minds being darkened by the God of this World. And if these poor senseless Creatures should with a few feigned words pretend to give God thanks for Jesus Christ, yet would it be but the Sacrifice of il Fools, ameer-service, and th erefore no way acceptable

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ble to the most holy God. Yea indeed they would hereby but very solemnly mock the Divine Majesty, whilst they thank him for those mercies which they will not accept at his hands; praising him for Jesus Christ and the benefits he brings, whilst they will have none of him or them, on the terms that God propoundeth. No, no, it is onely the broken-healed heart, the humble raised Soul, that can be feelingly and affectionately thankful to God for a Saviour, who hath wrought so great works for them and in them, and laid up such great provisions for the time to come. They that were less but are found, they that were dead but are alive; in these will their heavenly Father take pleasure, and these will rejoyce in his love, and return praise to him, who sent his Son to seek and save that which was lost.

To bring men into fuch a state and frame, that they may be disposed and enabled, from an inward sense of his Goodness, to render such thanks to the Father of Mercies, as may be well-pleasing to him; I should onely need to repeat what was before laid down to bring them to accept of Christ, which when once they are brought to, and arrived to any hopes of their acceptance with God through him, then both in heart and voice, with their lips and lives will they adore and praise him, who called them out of darkness into his mar vellous light. Wherefore study well your many and great necellities which Christ alone can supply. Consider to what miseries by fin you stand exposed, from which he alone can keep you. Remember what he did and fuffeted, how low he condescended for the sake of man, and temember your own utter unworthiness, that ever the last love or regard should have been manifested to you; and yet confider what great things are done for you; into how good a state matters are brought, what abundant bleffings are freely bellowed on the humble

and believing, what rich and precious promises are made them, what mercies are given for this life, and that to come, Grace and Glory, and whatever is good for men, nothing is withheld from them. Let but the consideration of all the rich and precious priviledges which Christ gives to his servants, sink into thy Soul, and then thou wilt find it even impossible, not to magnifie the Author and Purchaser of such Gists; nor wilt thou be able to refrain from expressions of thy Gratitude and Love; and therefore mayst worthily come to the Sacrament, there to exercise and express those holy affections.

CHAP. X.

VI. It must produce a boly love to Saints:

HE that rightly remembers the Death of Christ, and well confiders the infinite love herein shewn to mankind, cannot but be thereby wrought to an hearty love to all bis fellow Christians. And that's the last qualification I shall mention, necessary for all Communicants, and which flows from their remembrance of Christ, to wit, that they be in charity with all men, and have an especial endeared love to all true Christians, both those that communicate with them and others. To this great duty of brotherly love we have the most forcible engagement that ever could be imagined, by the example of our bleffed Lord laying down his life for us; and his behaviour at death, even praying for his perfect. tors, doth fufficiently tell us how we ought to behave our selves towards our bitterest adversaries. We see then what a Spirit we shall have wrought in us by a right remembrance of our dying Saviour, not onely toward th

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our friends but our Enemies themfelves. As for that love that ought to be amongst all true Christians, we find this is the new command, that he hath inculcated upon us, and obliged us to by the great example of his unparallell'd love, that we also thould love one another. 70b. 15. 12, 13. 1 70b. 3.16. And this he hath made the very Badge of his true Disciples, whereby they should be known from the rest of the world, Job. 13. 34,35. And one particular end of our meeting together at the Lord's Table, is to testifie and strengthen our mutual love. This we shew by our eating and drinking together , which is the custom of Friends: and this is one reason why this Sacrament is called the Communion. in that Christians have here the most endearing fellowthip with each other. For hereby is not onely represented their union with Christ their Head, and their spiritual communion with him, but that neerness of relation they have amongst themselves, being mystically united into one Body, whereof Christ is the Head, I Cor. 10.17. For we being many are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread Each Christian is fo related to, and joyned with the other, that they go to the making up of one Body, as the several Grains compacked together make one Bread; and by their joyne participation of this one Bread, they declare themselves to be but one Body, the Children of one Father, living in one Family, and feeding at the same Table, upon the very fame food, even upon Christ himself, who is the true wead that came downfrom Heaven; and upon their being united to Christ as Head, is founded this their so near and incimate relation to each other, to be Fellow-Members of the same Body; as they that have the same Soveraign are Fellow-fubjects, they that have the same Parents are Brethern: and by their feeding on this Sacamental food, and Christ himself therein, from whom

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the whole body being fitly joyned together makes increase unto the edifying of st felf in love, Eph. 4. 15, 16. having here a communion with him, which fills and acts them with the same spirit; hereby, I say, they receive a farther bond and disposition to the greatest unity of hearts and affections. So that we are especially engaged before our attendance upon this Ordinance, to go our way, and be reconciled to our Brother. The leven of malice, amongst all other wickedness, is to be purged out, when we keep this Feaft, 1 Cor. 5, 7, 8. And indeed we shall find this the general sense of people, that they ought to be in charity with their neighbours before they come to the Sacrament, whilst they discover too little sense of the necessity of other Graces that are equally needful; year whilst they remain destitute of this very charity it self. which they acknowledge to be fo necessary: for alas! they are not so easily brought to the practice of their duty as to acknowledge and commend it. For the plain truth'is, none can rife up to this excellent temper of Spirit, wherein one half of our Religion confifts, but he who is ingrafted into Christ, and transformed into his likeness by the Spirit of love; which may direct those who are yet void hereof, what course to take for the attainment of the fame, namely, to get united to Christ by a living faith and fervent love, whereby they shall find kindled in their breafts a new affection to all that do with them love the Lord Jesus. For certainly it is not enough for us, that we have no malice in our hearts against any nor wish them any hurt; this is a poor description of Christian charity, and may be found in a Turk or few, but there ought to be in us, besides a general love to all mankind, which makes us defrous of their good, a pecular tender love to all Christ's faithful servants, which causeth us to take delight in them, as such in whom we behold the image of God shining forth in their

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their holy conversations, and begets in us unfeigned defires for their good both of Soul and Body, and makes us willing to contribute our afliftance thereto, according to our ability and their necessities, inward or outward, and inclines us to rejoyce in their good in some measure as if it was our own; and hereby our hearts are fo knit to them, that we hold greatest familiarity with them, and take pleasure in their society and conference, and more especially in joyning with them in the worship and service of God. This is a most sweet affection, and the exercise of it is exceeding pleasant to a gracious Soul: which, was it more common in the world, would reform it from a Wilderness in to a kind of Paradice; and the perfection of it, will be one great part of our future happiness. But this true Christian love can dwell in none but fuch in whom God dwells, who is love. Onely they who are recovered out of the felfish carnal state, and are brought home to God by Jesus Christ, are the men that are capable of this sincere love to their brethern, for which many clear reasons might be given, was it needful and pertinent. But this may fuffice for all, that this affection is grounded upon, and follows our spiritual relation, and therefore a man must first be in Christ himselt, before he can love an cher purely as his brother in Christ, as a fellow-member of the same body. He that hath not submitted himself to his Prince, cannot love another upon account of his being a fellow subject with him to the same Soveraign : And hence it is we find this given in as a character of our Regeneration, I Joh. 2.14. Hereby we know we are past from death to life, because we love the brethren. Most certain it is, that they who find not in themselves a love to any people in the world upon account of their being made like to God in holiness, are destitute of true le ve to God himself. Wherefore I would advise you to tiy, M

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your selves by this note, look into your own hearts, and look abroad amongst those you hold your dearest friends, and examine what it is that draws out your love towards them. Are they therefore dear to you, because they appear to you to be lovers of God, and fuch as have a great zeal for his Glory, because they are of pious examplary lives, and therefore (fo far as you can discern) of gracious spirits? Do you love them as those that are bought with the same blood, and sanctified by the same spirit with your selves? As such who are helpful to your Souls, or receive help from you, and walk in the same holy way, and with whom you hope to live for ever in the same Glory? Or is not all your affection founded upon carnal reasons, and besto wed onely upon your kindred, or fuch that have done you courtesies in wordly matters; but as for the rest, you see no reason, why you should love one more than another. Nay farther, do you not find your hearts secretly rife against such holy persons, as I before mentioned, so that you had rather be in any company than theirs, and could even wish the world rid of them; because their blameless lives do condemn and shame yours; and fometimes their loving admonitions check and disturb you, as Lot was a trouble to the Sodomites? Are you not fo far from a reverend esteem of Godliness, that you can rather scoff at it, though perhaps under other names, and are prone to think it nothing else but fancy and folly to be so shy of sin, and so extream careful to please God? If it be thus, for certain you are no better than haters of God himself, as he is holy and just, though it may be you think not so much by your selves. He that loves the Father will love the Child also, so far as he's like him; he that loves the person will love his picture. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath feen, how can be love God whom he hath not feen? I Joh, 4.20.

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4.20. Wherefore see to get your hearts deeply effected with the Glories and Excellences of the bleffed God, and you will find your felves carried out to a great efleem of any shadows and resemblances of these in his Let Christ be once the chiefest of ten thouland to your Souls, altogether lovely and defireable, and then you will count those in whom he hath copied out himself, and shed abroad his own Spirit, to be the only excellent ones upon earth, in whom you will take great You will then fo fall in love with his Image wherever you discern it, that in comparison thereof you will even disdain all those worldly excellencies, which do so dazle the eyes of short-sighted, mean-spi-That humility, purity, reverence of the divine Majesty, gentleness, goodness, and all other fuits of the Spirit, which display themselves in the behaviour of the truly fanctified, will make them appear more honourable in your eyes, and render them far more dear to you than those, who have nothing to commend them to your esteem, but that they have great Elates, wear brave cloathes, and have high titles conferred upon them: though you must not be wanting in those respects that are due to outward greatness, yet if you be Cariffians of a right stamp, you will be such as David mentions, when he describes a Citizen of Zians, Pfal. 15. 4. One in whose eyes a vile person is contemned but be bonoureth them theat fear the Lord. Yea farther, you will he more reason for your love to those that are holy then to your brethren or nearest kindred in the flesh, or than to those that are only of the same opinions and principles that you your felves are of, which do lamentably confine and regulate the affections of the most. But the right Christian temper is far more generous and large; for being derived from the bowels of Christ, It begets the same disposition in the Souls wherein it M 2

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dwells, according to their capacity, that is in Christ himself. And therefore they that hate none, they envi none: as for the wicked miserable ones, they pity, and even mourn over them, as we find Christ did, and with patience and meekness are ready to give them all the help they can, to bring them out of their uncomfortable dangerous estates; but all whom they have reason to believe Christ loves, that walk as he hath enjoyned all his friends to do, thefe they dearly love: And fuch errors or infirmities, which will not cause Christ to withdraw his favour from them, will not take off their affections: for they dare not pretend to a greater frictness than their Lord, least what they might call pure zeal for him, should be found pure selfishness. therefore they dare not make their own private apprehensions, which they find not in the Creed, nor in the Gospel, the standard and measure of such as must pass for godly, and be thought worthy their regard and effects, which is the constant note of one addicted to a party: but, I fay, they would have their friendship as large as their Lord and Masters, since 'tis for his sake that they have any friends at all, fuch is the affection which God's Spirit works in his people, and with which they are possess'd so far as they are fram'd and moulded by his Spirit.

But moreover, the charity requisite in Communicants, consists not only in a cordial love to the Godly, whom they are to reckon upon as dearest friends, but also in forgiveness of injuries to all that are their enemies, and have done or endeavoured to do them wrong: which temper is of flat necessity to all that would come worthily to this Ordinance. Hither men come expecting a pardon; and can he look for a pardon of his many and hainous sine from the great God of heaven and earth, who will not forgive some small offence that he may

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ave received from his fellow-creature? Small, I fay, or the greatest injury that can be done us by another is exceeding small, and not worthy our notice so far as we our selves only are concerned therein. Selfish men will never believe this, but it's a certain truth, and fo plain, that many fober heathens do with great earnestness inculcate it. Alas what can they do but a little hinder our thriving in the world, or deny us that respect we would have by their careless carriage, or freak meanly or falfly of us to leffen our credit? fuch like trifles as these are the worst that we shall ordinanly meet with from our bitterest enemies. these such insufferable injuries, that by all means we mult feek to be revenged? Surely, fuch a wicked spirit cannot enter into the breast of a Christian, that remembers what he hath done against God, and yet what he expects from him, and what he hath already received.

And indeed there is nothing more likely to bring us to the performance of this duty to our brother, than the ferious confideration of the infinite mercy God hath hewn to us in fending his Son, and freely tendering forgiveness through him. This we find press'd upon us Epb. 4. 32. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's fake bath forgiven you; Col. 3. 13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And to engage us the more, our forgiving of others is made a condition of being forgiven our felves, Matth. 6 14, 17. For if ye lorgive men their trespasses, your beavenly father will also forgive you; but if you for give men not their trespasses, nerther will your Father for give your the paffes. How hardhearted must that servant be, who, when his Lord hath forgiven him ten thousand talents, rakes his brother by the M 3 throat

hroat, and cast him into prison for an hundred pence? How just is it that all the former debt should be charged by his Lord upon fuch a Servant? as you may find in the Parable at large, Matth. 18. from 23 to the end, where, after Christ had told, how terribly that unthankful cruel Servant was dealt with, he adds ver, last, So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you. if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. To love God above all, and our neighbour as our selves, are the two great commandements, whereon depend the Law and the Prophets, and which comprehend all our duty: and to both of these we have the greatest help and strongest obligation by the Death of Christ that ever could be thought on. Shall we not love him that have thus loved us? And shall we not thew pity and compassion to others who have received fo much our felves? Yea, who shall be shut out from mercy if we be unmerciful? No spirit in the world is fo contrary to the Gospel as that of malice and revenge, and retaining a fecret enmity and spight against any person whatever. As thou would'it escape the society and portion of Devils hereafter, beware how thou now entertaineth this Devilish nature, than which nothing is more frequently forbidden in the Gospel, and nothing more flatly enjoyned than the contrary temper, Gal. 5. 20. Now the fruits of the flesh are munifest, which are thefe, adultery, fornication, &c. batred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, beresies, envyings, murders: ver. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, lung-Suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, &c. Col. 3. E. But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blassberry, &c.v.12, 12. Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy and belowed) bowels of mercy kindness, humblenels of mind, meeknels, long-suffering. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corini bians to restifie the disorders they

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they were guilty of, in reference to the Lord's Supper, the first thing he falls upon, is the Divisions that were amongst them, 1 Cor. 11. 18. That composedness of Soul, that humility, self-abasement, and humble dependance upon free mercy, which are so absolutely necessary for him that would profit by this Ordinance, do all call for a quiet, charitable frame of Spirit toward our brethren, when we betake our selves thereto.

And thus (by Gods affiftance) have I in some meafure shown, from the nature and design of this Ordinance(which is to keep up the remembrance of Christ) how those persons must be qualified who can duly at-To repeat their description once atend thereupon. gain: They who are furnish'd with the knowledge of the necessary fundamental truths of Christian Religion, and do believe them to be indeed truths, being fo verily perswaded that Christ is the Saviour of the World. that they heartily consent to take him for their Saviour, and therefore being humbled for, and refolved prefently to turn from all their evil ways, do humbly expect (or at least earnestly desire) the pardon of their sins from the mercy of God for his fake, and are truly willing to have their hearts sanctified by the spirit of God, given out through him, that they may lead an holy life; and do depend upon him to bring them to everlasting Glory in the enjoyment of God, upon whom they have fet their dearest love, and chose him as their onely portion; being fincerely thankful for the manifestations of his wonderful love in Christ, and by the power of his love are in charity withall men, forgiving their enemies, and having a peculiar affection to the members of Christ: These, and onely these are fit to partake of the Lord's Supper. Wherefore I intreat thee, whoever thou art, that would'it not wilfully delude thy own Soul, and rush upon this duty to thy hurt, take thy self to task M 4 and

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and examine well whether thou art such a one as I have here described: yea, if thou hast any desire to escape everlasting misery, and be received into Heaven when thou diest; examine thy self; for except thou beest or becomest such a one, as sure as God is true, thou art never like to be saved.

CHAP. XI.

An invitation to come to Christ and his Sacrament,

the early treat of a stare lady serge and early

M Y next work is now to call upon and exhort all, thus to examine and prepare themselves, and so to come and eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup. Ho! all you that have any love to the bleffed Jesus, who loved you to the shedding of his warmest hearts-blood for your fakes, come hither and shew forth his death till be come. If Christ be precious to you, let his memory be precious, and be you careful to preferve it by your due and frequent attendance upon this Ordinance, fet up on purpose for the Remembrance of him. All you whose eyes have been opened to discern the vileness of your natures and conversations; come hither, and give a kindly vent to your Sorrow, beholding fin at the worst, in those wounds that it gave to your dearest Saviour. All you that are indeed convinced that Christ is the true Messiah, com'n forth from God to give life to the World, and are resolved to hearken to him that your Souls may live, come hither, and before God, Angels, and Men, profess these Resolutions; and bind your felves over to him, to be his Disciples and most obedient Servants. Be not asham'd of the Cross of Christ, but avow it before all the World, that L'is In A M. your

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your hope or happiness is placed only in that Jesus, who was flain and hanged on a Tree, but is rifen again and ascended into the Heavens; hereby own that you are Christians, let others be what they will. Come hither all you that hunger and thirst after righteousness, and feed upon him, who here conveys of himself to the emptylonging Soul, and fatisfies his people with good things fuitable to their wants. Come hither poor dejefled drooping Soul, that dost unseignedly love thy Lord, but art afraid thou shalt never obtain his favour; come and fee what he hath done to affure thee of the reality, the freeness and fulness of his love; Come and taste the provisions he hath made for thy comfort, and rejoyce in the sense of his bounty. All you that expect shortly to look your Redeemer in the face, come hither and behold him, where till then, you may most dearly differn him. Here stamp his image firmly upon your minds, that he may live in your breafts, though for a while he is out of your fight, that, till you shall see him, you may never be forgetful of him. Come hither young ones, and betimes lift your felves under Christ your Leader, here Remember your Creatour and Redeemer in the days of your youth! Come hither ye aged that have stood idle in the Market-place, till the eleventh hour of the day, now at length hire your felves under the Lord of the Vineyard, to be more industrious in his service for the hour that is behind. Come hither ye Poor, and partake of a Feast that shall cost you nothing. Come hither ye Rich, to a Feast more precious and costly than ever you were at, which cost the Master thereof his own life to provide it. Come hither, ye Masters, and promise to become the Servants of Christ. Come hither ye Servants, and by taking Christ for your Lord become his Freemen. Yea, all you that have been the most estranged from God, and greatest despisers of Christ,

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Christ, yet now at length if you will come in, acknow. ledging the folly of your former ways, protesting against any longer continuance therein, humbly imploring mercy and acceptance from God through his Son, even you are invited hither, to testifie the truth of your return to him, and to receive the pardon that is ready for you, Behold Wisdom bath builded her house, and furnish'd her table, and calls to all to eat of her Bread, and drink of the Wine that the bath mingled; to all that are fully determined to for sake the foolish, and go in the way of understanding. Hearken you foolish prodigals, whose Souls are out of tafte with all folid food, though you are feeding upon the luscious delights of fin and the creature, which yet have onely deluded, never fatisfied you: Cast away these empty husks, and come to a plenteous Feast here made ready, wherein you will acknowledge there is fweetness and fulness, if your distempers be cured. and your appetite and relish changed. So large is the commission which Christ hath granted, that in his name I dare confidently invite all, whoever they are, or whatever they have been, even the most profane and sensual, drunkards and whore-mongers, the proud and covetous, if now at last you will be perswaded to bid an everlasting farewel to all your ways of wickedness, and for the time to come walk in the holy path, fee that you are fincere, and you may come boldly to the Sacrament, there to manifest and confirm these purposes. If at length you are weary of that miserable drudgery, wherein the enemy and tormentour of mankind, the Devil, hath employed you, labouring to keep you in bondage to fin, than which there is not a more loathsome slinking Dungeon, more intollerable chains in all the World; if, I say, you would fain be delivered from this flavery, and will take on you Christ's easie yoke, that you may find rest for your souls, come hither and enter your

your selves into his Service, engaging to be subject to him all the days of your life. In a word, all you that have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, and understanding what that signifies do consent to the obligations thereby laid upon you, come to the Lord's Supper, and manifest this consent, and renew this Covenant to be the Lords.

en you to the performance of this weighty duty, which I propose not so much to those who are already prepared, that they would come to this Feast; but rather to all indifferently, that they would prepare themselves,

and come away without any longer delay.

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1. To that end, first consider, this is the express command of Christ, as you may find at his first institution of this Sacrament before mentioned, Luke. 22. 19. This do in remembrance of me. And to whom was this command given do you think? only to the Apostles; or in them to all Christians? What reason can be given why it should be peculiar to them, and not common to others? They were look'd upon, and spoke to here, as Disciples, and therefore all Christ's Disciples are concerned therein. And you cannot think this was an injunction that had reference to that time onely; the very phrase, Remembrance, speaks the contrary: for this implies something that's past, or absent; which shews they were to do this after the Death of Christ should be past, and ascended from them into Heaven, in remembrance of him and his Death. But to put the matter past doubt, we have the practice of the Apostles after Christ's Death and Ascension, telling us how they understood this command: And I hope we shall find none so impudent, as to fay they misunderstood it. Now though it was always wont to be acounted profaneness, to violate the commands of Christ, yet there are a fort of men in the world

world, that would make it a piece of religion for footh to contemn this his injunction, and their disobedience to his Law must pass for a sign of their perfection. But if they stand condemned by all impartial men, who not only in name, but in deed, would bring more Sacraments into the Church than Christ hath done, giving the same honour to, and pleading for the same efficacy and necessity of their inventions as of Christ's own institutions, wherein the Papifts are grofly guilty: what do they better, who would cast forth of the Church those Sacraments which our Lord hath ordained, as if they were useless unnecessary things, which is the do-Etrine of our Quakers. If there was nothing else to be faid in answer to the unreasonable pretences of these men is it not enough that we have a plain command of Christs oppose to their Fancy? He saith to all his followers, Do this, and they fay, Do it not: which should we rather hearken to? And hereby judge what spirit that is, which rifeth up in such flat contradiction to the voice of Christ? But farther, can they or any man elfe shew, that this command is founded upon such reafons, as makes it of less force and obligation to us, than to those whom it was first given to? Do not all the grounds of this duty which were then, still remain the fame? as I shall shew more afterward. Wherefore let them either shew where Christ hath repealed the precept which he once gave, or let them beware of falling under the woe denounced against such, as not only break his commands, but teach others fo to do.

And little less guilty than these are they, who, though they will grant Christ's command in force, yet give not obedience to it; and though they will not say this Sacrament is unprofitable, yet by their neglect receive no profit from it. All you that have been long since at years of discretion, and have had frequent

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opportunities to come to the Lord's Table, and yet have not cared to inform your felves, what it is you should do there, what good you should get by it, and so have taken no care to make preparations for this duty, but from year to year have neglected it; what think you of this course, I befeech you? Stay a while and reflect up. on it. Did you never hear of a command given by the Lord Jesus, that all true Christians should meet together at this Supper, and there in remembrance that his body was broken, and his blood shed for them, eat Bread, and drink Wine, fet apart for that purpose? Hath he given a command to this purpose, or hath he not? That it was spoken to the Apostles, I have told you, hinders not, but that it belongs as well to you, fince if you be fincere Christians as they were, you have the same When Christ bids them cause to do this that they had. deny themselves, love one another, and pray to the Father in his name; do not these precepts reach you and I, as well as those patticular persons to whom he spake them? And tell me if you can, why the case is not the fame, as to that command of his, which I have even now mentioned, that we should Do this, receive this Sacrament of his Supper, in remembrance of him. He that hath commanded you to mortifie your lufts, to love God above all, he it is hath enjoyned you to do this; and if you think he ought to be obeyed in one thing, why not in all? So then fince you cannot but grant, that fuch a command there is, what can you fay for your selves who have disobeyed it? Are you not hereby guilty of contemning the Authority of the Law-giver? what fay you? Do you think you have herein behaved your felves as you ought? Can you imagine, that this your negligence and disobedience is acceptable to the Lord Jesus? Or do you not care whether it is or not? I hope it is not all one with you to please or to provoke him. Does not then your

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your Consciences by this time smite you for your carelesness? If not, I doubt it is seared, and senseless; if it does, then let me ask you what you intend for the time to come? Will you hold on that course which you dare not justifie, which your own Conscience condemns you for? Dare you still persist in the breach of a known Law? Have you any thing to fay against the Law it felf, or against him that made it? Is it not the Law of Christ the Son of God, your Redeemer? And hath not he power to enjoyn you what he pleafeth? Hath not he right to govern you upon account of his Redeeming you? And are not all things delivered into his hands by the Father? Yea, does not the Father himself speak to you in and by him? does not he himself tell us, that the words which he spoke were the Fathers that sent him? John 14. 10. and 24. Can you then gainfay Christ's Authority? If not, how dare you relist it? Do you indeed take him for your Lord, or not? Answer me one way or other. If you do not, then call your felves no longer Christians: for this your subjection is essential to your Christianity, as I have before shewed. If you do, then pray tell me, how can this confift with wilful violation of plain precepts? Do you take him for your Master, if you will yield him no reverence nor fear? Will you not be as subject to your Lord as the Centurion's servants were to him? to whom if he said but, do this, they did it. Let this be the tryal whether you will or not: Behold Christ saith to thee in the Gofpel, and now in his name, and with power from him, I charge thee, Do this, come and partake of his Supper which he hath prepared for his friends and followers. Here now is a Do this: wilt thou obey it or not? If thou wilt not, consider well, whether Christ be like to reckon thee among his faithful Servants at last; and what thou would'ft think of a Servant of thy own

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that should carry himself thus towards thee. What the usual shifts and evasions are, I shall take notice anon and give thee an answer. Onely at present let me make halt to intreat thee not to mistake me, and deceive thy felf, as if I was thus earnest and importunate with thee for nothing else, but to go with thy neighbours fometimes when a Sacrament is administred, and there ake a bit of Bread, and a sup of wine, with a little feming reverence, without any due confideration before or after to what purpose it is. Canst thou be so filly as to imagine, thou hast satisfied the will of Christ when thou hast done this? Or canst thou think thy Soul ever the better for it? Wherefore remember what it was I first exhorted thee to, namely to examine and prepare thy felfe, and fo to eat of this bread, and wink of this Cup; to repent of, and fet thy felf against all fin, and to devote thy felf to Chrift, and then to take the Sacrament as a testimony that thou dost so, and as a bond to oblige thee firmer to him. This I have frequently told thee; and that thou mayst be sure to understand my meaning, and remember it, take it once again in this plain comparison; If a Master was about to bargain with one to be his Servant, offering fo much wages, and a Shilling in earnest; and another that stands by, having a mind to drive on the bargain, should perswade the Servant not to stand off, but to take his earneft; do you not know what he meant by this? Do you think he wisht the man onely to take the Shilling. and go his way without any more ado? furely no, but wagree with him to become his Servant, to do the work he should appoint him, and to shew his consent wthis, should take the Shilling that was to be given in earnest. Thus, Reader, being earnestly desirous to drive on a match betwixt Christ and thy Soul, I would hin begthee to take the Sacrament, as an evidence of thy

thy consent to be come his faithful servant; but upon no other terms I'll assure thee. Wherefore it thou be resolved against the diligent service of God, and yet venturest upon this Ordinance, let the blame be upon thy own head. Do not think to excuse thy self by saying, thou read'sta Book that told thee it was Christ's command to all, that they should receive the Sacrament, and that therefore thou didst as thou wast instructed for again and again have I made known to thee, that none ought to do thus but true Christians, such as believe in, love and obey the Lord Jesus, and this is that to which thou art implicitly urged by that very command which he hath given for the frequenting his Supper.

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And this I would press upon all that perform this duty rudely and negligently, as well as on those that altoge ther omit it. Let not fuch careless ones imagine, they have hitherto rendered due obeidence to this command. For consider, when a Duty is enjoyned, all that is no ceffary in order thereto is thereby enjoyned, and the right manner of performing it also. Thus when we are commanded to pray to God, by that very command we are engaged to get the knowledge of God, and to believe that he can hear and help us, and also to be reverent and serious in our prayers : for without these and the like qualifications we may fay over many words, but we cannot properly be faid to pray. Thus when Christ commands us to eat Bread, and drink Winem remembrance of him, he hereby commands us to get our hearts into fuch a frame, that we may be fit and able to remember him with those affections, and in that manner that it befeems ranfomed men to remember their Redeemer. And therefore we must know him, and be fenfible of our own flavery, and be willing to be Redeemed by him, and be thankful for his love, with the other qualifications which I have befere shewn to be necessary

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hecessary to, and included in our remembrance of him. If you make a Feast on purpose to entertain a Friend. you thereby suppose not onely that he should come to your Table, but that he should come with a stomach to eat of your provisions. And when Christ invites men to his Table, where he hath provided spiritual food under the outward elements, do you not think he reoures all that come, that they should have an appetite to, and defire after what he hath provided for them? Thus then have I laid open to you the flat command of Christ, whereby you are required to put your selves in a right posture, and come to this Feast which he hath ordained in his Church, as a memorial of the Redemption he wrought for it. Whether you will obey it or not I cannot tell, I leave that to your choice; if you have any reason that seems stronger than the will of Christ, do as you shall think fit; onely remember the command I have been urging upon you, was given you by that Jesus who will be your Judge, and whose sentence will pass according to that word, whereof this command is a part; and if you think you have got any fuch excuse, as will bring you off clear at that day, though you be found guilty of contemning his Law, have no more to fay, but at your own peril be it : Here I have given you faithful warning.

Christ's command, but the example of his Apostles, Difiples, and the Primitive Christians to engage you to this duty, wherein they were all consciencious and frequent, Acts 2.42. They that were converted by the preaching of the Apostles continued stedsastly in their dottine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And this you may find was the practice of the Church of Corinth (and by consequence of all other Churches then planted) in that the Apostle rectifies the abuses

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they were guilty of therein, as you may find at large, 1 Cor. 11. 17. to the end. And are not we to walk as we have these for an example, and to be followers of them as they are of Christ? Moreover, they that are skill'd in Church-History tell us, that it is most certain, it was the custom of the primitive Christians, usually to celebrate this Sacrament every Lords day at least. And by the way take notice, though we have no particular precept in Scripture how frequently we ought to do it, yet from thence we are taught, that it ought to be done more than once; and the practice of those who best knew the mind of Christ may inform us, that it ought to be done often; though the particular times are

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2. In the next place I would wish you well to confider, whether you have not good reason to conclude, that you shall receive much advantage from the performance of that duty, which is recommended to you by the express command of Christ, and the example of his first follow-Was there nothing else to be shewed but a command from him, whom you acknowledge your Soveraign, one would think it enough to filence all objections, and bring you to obedience. But do you not moreover believe, that Christ designed the good of his Servants by the institution of this Sacrament in his Church? Are any of his Commands grievous or unprofitable? Is not the whole design of Christian Religion evidently for our Interest, if we believe we have immortal Souls? And can you imagine this one duty to be an exception from all the rest? as having nothing in it which may make it worthy our performance. Hath not he backt his Commands with promises, that we might have all kind of encouragement to his Service? Hath not he told us, that to those who keep his Comande ments he will manifest himself? Do you think then, that when

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when Christ first set up this Sacrament, he hereby intended any advantage to those who should celebrate it? If not, he appointed them a meer piece of drudgery, in some respect worse than the Jewish Ceremonies (for they had their use to the Spiritual) and even as bad as thole burthensome ridiculous Ceremonies, which make up so great a part of the Popish Religion; but if you dare not affirm this, then I would know, whether the same advantages do not still continue to this Ordinance, which were first intended to be communicated by it to the worthy Receiver? Again, did the Apostles and their companions get any good by it, think you? If not, it's strange they should be so exact and frequent in it; if they did, fain would I know why the fame good is not still to be got by serious diligent Christians. Certainly God's treasures of Grace are not spent, his fountain is not drawn dry, nor never will be. He that will be the everlasting portion of his People, when this World is ended, hath enough fure in himself for the supply of all their necessities, whilst they are travelling through the World. When millions of Saints have received that Grace which leads them to Glory, there is not a jot the less for those that come after. And as his Graces are not exhausted, so neither is the way of giving them forth changed; in the same manner that his Spirit accompanied the Word and Sacraments, at any time fince the Gospel was publish'd, in the same manner it accompanies them still, for ought that any man living can shew to the contrary. Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. He who will be with his Minihers till the end of the World, will be with his Ordinancestill then, and with his people in the consciencious we of them. Why should the first Christians be tied to that which we in after-ages may neglect? Is not our of the same with theirs? Are not our necessities as

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great? And may not our profitings also, if the fault be not our own? To profecute this a little farther, as I promised. Is not the death of Christ as great a mercy to us in these latter days of his Church, as it was to them in the first? Have not we the same pardon offered to us, the same promises given, the same Heaven prepared. and the same sanctifying Spirit to bring us thereto; Have we not then the same cause to be frequently mindful of, and thankful for these mercies, and the Death that purchas'd them, in all ways prescribed to that purpose? Are not we still of the same nature that men were then? Such whose affections are most raised and quickened by sensible things, by the help whereof we can with greater clearness and power conceive of things spiritual, and can more affectionately remember what's past, when we see it represented and acted afresh before our eyes. Is it not therefore our wisdom and duty to accept of fuch affiftances as our Lord himself, in his care of us, hath afforded? Whereof the Sacrament of his Supper is a principal one, every way fitted for Were they more dull than we, that they should need such quickning means which we judge our selves past the use of? Had not we as much need as they to be frequently renewing our more folemn repentance for fin, and covenantings with God, that fo the consideration of those renewed engagements we lyeunder, may the more overpower us to faithfulness and perseverance in his service? Are not our wants of Grace as great as theirs: And therefore ought we not to wait in all those ways whereby these wants may be supplied? which are the same now as formerly. Is it not as richa mercy now as ever, to have all the bleffings and priviledges of the Covenant of Grace, whether temporal, spiritual, or eternal, not onely represented, but made over and affured to us, in fuch a familiar manner? Is m o

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not the excercise and strengthening of mutual brotherly love, by the maintaining of the most endearing Christian communion, still a most pleasant and profitable duty? now especially, when all men have learnt to cry out, how cold Charity is grown? Thus you fee there are very many, and those no small advantages that accrue to such as carefully manage this weighty duty, and all of them continue still the same that they were in the time of the Apostles. And let there be any other ground of their practice affigued, or any other benefit which they hereby enjoyed, and I question not to prove, that we have the same, or the like grounds, and are capable of the same benefits with them. Thus have I shewn you, that to come in a due manner to the Lord's Table is both your duty and your interest; there is a command given by your Lord, obliging you to what is good for your felves, (and indeed so do all other his commands if well weighed.) And what more can be faid to work upon men that have any conscience, or any self-love, to give obedience? Wherefore if you be Christians, yea, if you be men; if you have any sense of God's authority, or of your own necessities, make all possible hast out of that dangerous woful estate which makes you unfit for, and unwilling to this fo profitable a duty; and your Souls being made ready, let them bring your bodies hither. Having been larger in these, I shall be brief in those that follow.

3. It is much to be feared, that whilf you flight the Sacrament, you flight those blessings which hereby are represented, and assured to Belivers. You your selves would judge so by others in cases like this. If the King should proclaim, that he will give Estates in some of his Plantations to all that will come to the Court, and take Patents from him, and subscribe their Names to a Bond, which only ties them to acknowledge they had

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their Estates from his bounty, and to live there acording to his Laws: is it not a fign, that they who will not do thus much, do very little care for the Estates that are offered them? and do not they manifest as little regard of Heaven it felf, and all the promises of the Gospel, who are loath to be at fo much pains, as to go to the Sacrament, there to have all these confirmed to them? being unwilling to bind themselves hereby to thankfulness and obedience to that God, who makes them fuch large and bounteous offers. He that refuseh a cheap and easie Medicine, which being duly taken may recover him from his fickness, may well be faid to undervalue his health. Thus it is too apparent, that thou little regardest the health of thy Soul, whilst thou flightest those means, which, through the blessing of the great Phylician upon the careful we of them, might tend to much to thy healing and strenghening. If a Shilling be offered me in earnest of a thousand Pound to be given upon some certain conditions, if I refuse to take it, it is not so much the Earnest as the greater Sum that I thereby reject. Thus Heaven is affured to thee up on condition of thy faith and obedience, and if thou likest it upon these terms, the Sacrament shall be given thee in Earnest, but if thou wilt not take the Earnest thou feemest to put away from thee everlasting life. If a condemned man tear in pieces the King's Pardon which is brought to him, his fault is not fo much the tearing of a piece of Paper, as his contempt of the Pardon. Thus shall it be laid to thy charge, not meerly the despising a bit of Bread and a sup of Wine, but thy sliting all those rich and unvaluable bleffings which hereby were offered and affured to Believers. If indeed thou prizeft thefe, fliew it by thy fetting a due efteem upon that which hath so near a relation to them; but if thou value them not, think not much if thou go without them for ever: for

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for whom canst thou blame, if thou miss of these things which thou carest not for?

4. Is not this neglect a fad fign, that thou performeft no duty as thou oughtest, nor to those ends thou shouldest? for if thou did'it rightly improve any, why thould'it thou not be glad of all? Art thou not ready to try all courses, and use all means for the continuance and increase of thy butward welfare? and yet thou thinkelt every thing too much that's enjoyned thee for thy Spiritual advantage. and therefore comest not to this Ordinance, as thinking thou mayst do well enough without it. They that are in health use not to say, if they have one fort of food, what shall they do with another? or it they eat one Meal in a day, why need they eat another? and yet this is thy language in reference to thy Soul. So long as thou hast been baptized, and comest to Church, and fay'ft thy Prayers (and it's well if thou do thus much) why may not this ferve thy turn without coming to the Sacrament? Why tell me, pray thee, what's thy defign in these duties? Is it to get, good to thy Soul? That thou mayst grow in Grace, and get fitter for Glory? If it be, why then is not every duty acceptable to thee, which would help on this defign? but is it not rather to be fear'd, that these are done out of custom without expecting, and therefore without finding any great advantage from them? and because the neglect of that duty I am urging thee to, is too common, and so no great matter of difgrace, therefore thou makest so light ofit. And withall, perhaps there is somewhat more : pains requisite to prepare thee for it, and therefore out of meer floth and laziness thou holdest off. Oh that thou wast but set in as good earnest, to enrich thy Soul with Grace, as the most of men, and its like thou thy felf art, to grow rich in the World! How many ways will they wind and turn to get a little Gain? If one N 4

course will not serve they'll take another, and if that fail, they'll try a third; what they missin one bargain, they'll feek to make amends for in the next. Thus would it be with thee, wast thou a diligent Christian: thou would'st turn every stone, seek every corner for the Pearl of price. Didst thou once by experience know the worth and excellency of true Grace, and the fatistying sweetness of conversing with God, thou would's be very diligent in the use of all those means whereby these advantages are to be attained: what thou had'st got at one duty, would prompt thee to another, in hopes to find the like; or if thou hast mist of thy hopes in one, it will put thee upon another, there to get fatisfaction. If thou found'ft thy self at a distance from God, or under fears of his displeasure, thou would'st never be at rest with thy self till thou hadst found him, whom thy Soul loved, and had'ft got a renewed sense of his love to thy Soul: in all those ways wherein he gives a comfortable meeting to his people, wouldst thou give constant attendance, ever earnestly waiting for the gracious and comfortable manifeltations of himself in thy Soul. But fince thou canst so contentedly miss one Priviledge, and that of so great importance, it's a shrewd fign that thou improvest not any as thou oughtest; and what a wretched starven case then must thy Soul needs be in?

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thus regardless for the provision made for thy Soul, whilst thou art so greedy and forward after any thing that makes for the gratifying of thy slesh. Generally in the World men refuse no pains to supply their bodily necessities, and yet when here is food provided to their hands, they have no mind to it; because this is onely suted to their Souls. How eagerly can they hunt after that which they are never like to obtain, or which, if they do, will never

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fatisfie and fill them, whilst they put away from them the savory meat which God hath brought to them: which would be favoury if their taste was not spoiled. Whilst Manna is loathed that falls before the tent-door, how do they long after the Garlick and Onions, and Flesh-poes of Egypt! May I not justly say that the Table of Devils is more frequented than the Table of the Lord? Though men no adayes do not offerer Sacrifices to Devils, as those Idolaters did, of whom the Apostle speaks, yet do they not sacrifice to their own lusts? And is not this as acceptable service to the Devil, and as provoking to God? And do they not maintain a fellowship with Devils, whilst their nature is so conformable, and their lives fo subject to them? Such are all swinish Epicures, who serve their own belly rather than the Lord Fess. Oh what multitudes have we got of fuch voluptuous ones, who had rather bring fickness upon their Bodies, and damnation upon their Souls, by pleasing their greedy unsatiable Throat, than come to refresh and strengthen themselves with such food, as through the Spirit of life accompanying it, will preferve both Soul and Body to everlasting life. Wisdom in vain fends forth her Embassadors, to stand in the highest places of the City, to call passengers to the banquet the has made, whilft the destroyer of Souls is hearkned to, calling them off from the right way, telling them, that stoln waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant: and with these unlawful pleasures do foolish sinners glut themselves, not remembring, that he doth but feed them for the flaughter, and that his guests are in the depths of bell, Pro. 9. Oh how will this agravate the condemnation of the prophane in our days, that whilft they could not be kept out of the Alehouse and Tavern, but lay there day and night, drinking away their wit, their money, and oftentimes their life it felf,

yet no entreaties could bring them duly to prepare themselves, and come to eat and drink at the Lord's own Table. Hadft thou but fuch a favour offered thee as Haman, to be entertained at a banquet with the King and Queen, how forwardly wouldest thou accept it, and with what pride wouldest thou boast of it, as he did? But yet when the King of Glory invites thee to be his Gueft, thou thinkest not his invitations worth hearkning to. fo mean are thy thoughts of his company and fare. Yea, dost thou not see how importunate Beggars are for an Alms? They come to thy door, & fland begging for Bread, and will hardly be driven away empty: and yet when thou are thus begged to accept Bread that comes from Heaven, thou wilt not receive it. Here men must be compell'd, that is, importunately woo'd to come in, and yet they will not be prevailed with : or if they do come, it is oftentimes in fuch a careless manner, that gives as much displeasure to him who sent for them, and brings as much milchief upon themseves as if they had staid away. But of this I foake in the beginning, wherefore I shall onely add, that it is to me a matter of astonishment, that those who know their bodies will shortly be in the Grave, and who fay they verily believe their Souls must live for ever, that those very men should with so much care and unweariedness feed and maintain their bodies, whilst willingly and out of meer sloth, they suffer their immortal Souls to flarve and perish eternally.

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6. Consider, this is a juncture of time wherein especially than art engaged to do all that in thee lies, toward the speedy securing of thy everlasting happiness; and therefore in the most solemn manner, to consecrate thy self to God at the Sacrament, there renouncing all thy ways of wickedness whereby thou hast provoked him, that so thy peace may be made with him. For consider how he hath lately appeared in judgment against us, and shewn that

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that he hath a fore controversie with us : and This was shall not we, the surviving inhabitants of mritten fan the Land, learn righteoufnels hereby? Shall after the not we be fo wife as to meet him in the way. Great before his anger be kindled against us in par-Plague in 16053; che gicular? It is to be feared, the neglect of this Eieft Editsvery duty, and the grols miscariages in the on being manner of performing it, have done much printed in toward the halfning of those judgments we 1666, And shall not this teach have lain under. thee what to do for the future? Wift thou go on to provke the Lord to jealouse to that his anger should not be turned away, but his hand stretched out still. And if thou art one who hast lately been preserved from the very Graves mouth, whereinto thou wast ready to fall, being in continual expectation of Death through the Visitation, or any other diffemper, I would with thee to look back, and confider what were the thoughts of thy heart at that time; thou. I mean, who halt lived a loole and careless life? Did not thy Conscience fly in thy face for all thy wickedness? And didst thou not resolve, that if God should spare thee, thou would'st become a new man, and lead another kind of life than than thou hast done? Did it not terrifie thee to remember how thou hadft neglected praying, hearing, and receiving Sacraments? And didft thou not make promises within thy self, that, if God would try thee once again, it should be no more thus? But that thou wouldst be as diligent and constant therein for the time to come, as thou hadft been flack and negligent before. Well, now God hath tried thee according to thy defire: thou who might'ft have been fent to the place where Repentance will do no good art yet kept upon Earth, to see what will be the fruit of thy afflictions, where yet thou art within the reach of mercy.

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mercy if thou throw not thy felf out of it. What then shall become of all thy good purposes and promises? Are they gone as foon as thy fickness and pain are gone? Are they all forgotten already? Yet be thou fure God will remember them: and fain would I perswade thee to remember them too; and now in particular, having prepared thy Soul to address thy felf to the Lord's Table. and there renew all those vows and resolutions which thou madelt in the time of fickne's and danger; an I humbly implore mercy and pardon for thy former earelessness, and all thy transgrettions, and help from God to walk more closely with him for the future. Let me now in season be thy Remembrancer from the Lord and bring to mind what Engagements thou hast made to him, and see thou be faithful to them: But if they be flighted, and all that I have faid to thee be flighted. because now thou art lusty and well, and seeft no death near thee, and halt fomething else to do, than to trouble thy felf with being foreligious, as dying men use to be yet let it fink into thy thoughts, that there is just such another time coming upon thee; very shortly thou wilt be lick again, and cast vpon thy death-bed, and dost thou not think the very fame thoughts will then come into thy mind again? When thou shalt consider thy self just lanching forth into eternity, and shalt look back upon all thy ungodly deeds, and thy undervaluing the means of Grace, by an improvement of which thou mightest have been made ready for fuch an hour as this, wilt thou not then begin again to fall to wishing that it had been otherwise, and to purposing thou wilt be better hereafter, if once again thou mayst be recovered. But when thy Conscience with a redoubled fury, shall rise up and bid thee remember, how thou didst long ago, in the fame condition, seem as penitent as this comes to, but yet all came to nothing, and that therefore thou halt

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no reason to expect a farther tryal; and shall moreover tell thee, that it is most likely all this is out of meer flavish fear, and not out of any true love to God and Holines; how wilt thou be able to hold up under fuch a dreadful charge as this from thy own awakened Confcience? It is my great defire to prevent thy being then overwhelmed with fuch thoughts as thefe; and if thou art but as willing, they may be effectually prevented, even by fpeedily fetting upon fuch a course, as will he the rejoycing of thy Soul at that day, when nothing else will rejoyce thee, but the testimony of God's Spirit witnessing with thy Conscience, that by the grace of God thou hast had thy conversation in simplicity & Godly sincerity. For without this it would be but a poor refuge for thee, to call for a Sacrament on thy death-bead, who didft flight it in thy health. 7. Consider, Whether by this contempt of the Ordinances of Christ, thou may st not provoke him justly to withdraw them from us, and to bestow them upon a people that will more prize, and frequent, and better improve them. than we have done. If Children be so indifferent to their food, that they play with it, or throw it away, it's hut should be taken from them. When people are wanton and curious, that they know not how to be pleased, but upon the least dislike reject their Spiritual food, it's a fign they want the best of sawces, a good stomach, which it's just they should be brought to by being kept short. Or if they be so lazy, that they think it more ado than needs, to be diligent in those exercises of Religion, which our Lord hath appointed, and take the greatest priviledges for burdens, is it not just they should be eased of them; for who will continue kindnelles to those, who take them for injuries? Yea, can they expect any other, than ere long to be removed into a world, where they shall never more be troubled with fuch heavy impositions? You that are now ready

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to fay what a stir's here with Sermons, Prayers, and Sacraments? and think all your time loft thats spent in them, and are vext to think, that you must have so many interruptions from your fins or worldly bufiness? be content a while, and you shall have no cause long to complain of these things you now judge so grievous There's none of this ado in the Hell your ungodlines leads to; but whether there be not fadder things there. your Experience ere long is like to give you full conviction, if nothing sooner will convince you. judge reasonably, must it not needs be an high displeasure to God, to fee his Creatures contemn the most precious mercies, as if they were nothing worth? How would you take it, if, when out of courtesie you had invited a poor man to your Table, and had made ready the best that could be had for him, he should find fault with your meat, and ask you why you troubled him to come from home to fuch a poor Dinner as this? Would you think he deserved to have the worst bit there? If your Landlord, or any rich neighbour should bid you to a Feast, would you send word by his Servant, that he had nothing worth coming for, but that you could provide for your felf better at home? Or if you should fend fuch word, do you think you should be invited twice? And yet thus fawcy and unthankful have you been toward the great God, whilst you have kept away from his Table; notwithstanding which, he hath again, and again fent forth his Servants to invite you thither; in that way and to those ends which he hath revealed. But, oh Sir, do no more so foolishly, so impudently, I beseech you, left at length you should move God to withdraw from you the mercies you trample on; and you, when it is too late, should be put to seek with tears those blesfings which once you cared not for, and therefore mult never have.

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8. Isit not a very great fign that you forget Christ himfelf, whilst you can thus quietly pass from year to year without remembring him at the Sacrament? Could you possibly do thus if you bore him upon your minds, and were sensibly affected with the frequent thoughts of all his love towards you? would you not then take all opportunities to express this your thankful sense of his kindness? The Children of Ifrael, we read, were enjovned to keep the Feast of the Passeover, as a memorial of their deliverance out of Agypt; and, if when they were come into Canaan, they should after a few years have left it off, might not God justly have tax'd them with forgetting their deliverance it felf? and is not the case much what the same here? So we find. Exod. 12. 26, 27. that when their children should see them keeping this Feast, and ask what the meaning was, they were to answer, It is the facrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, in that night when he smote the Agyptians, and delivered our houses. If now these Children, when they were of capacity, should refuse to keep this Feast, as they were commanded, is it not a fign that either they believed not what their Parents told them, or else thought there was nothing in it worth the remembrance? Thus if any of you should demand what's the meaning of our affembling together at certain times, to eat and drink Bread and Wine in so serious a manner, it may be answered you, This is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he appointed in the night wherein he was betrayed, for a memorial of that death, whereby he destroyed the king dom of Satan, and delivered his people. If you now take this to be true, and think it deferves any folemp Remembrance, come as you have been directed, and joyn with the rest in this work; if you refuse this, you can never fure have the face to fay, that you do

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do in your hearts remember Christ. If one that had bestowed some great matters upon the Town he lived in, should order at his death, that the Inhabitants of that Town should, upon a certain day in the year, meet together at a Feast, to keep up the memory of his bounty; if they neglected this, might it not well be faid they forgot their Benefactor; And does not your neglect of this Sacramental Feast, as plainly shew a forgetfulness of your great Benefactor who ordained it? Oh wonderful! that ever men who hath heard, who lefus Christ is, and what he hath done, should be thus unmindful of him. Ah Sirs, read the History of his life, think foundly of his Death, and confider then, whether he thus deserves to be forgotten by you. Had he had no more thought of us, where had we now been, and what had become of us for ever? Hath he done so much for you, even without your feeking, and when he requires so little of you, is he denied? If but a dying Friend should take his Ring off his finger, and put it on yours, and bid you look on that Ring, and remember him, should you not easily do it. But much more, if this Friend had upon any account given up himself to die for your preservation, and should onely engage you by remembring him, to beware of that fault whereby your life was endangered, and his was loft, would not the memory of fuch a friend be ever fresh, and precious with you, if you had any humanity, any sense of friendship and kindness? And would not your Bowels be even turned within you, whenever you beheld this Ring? But alass! how far comes this short of the kindness which Christ hath shewn to poor sinners, in many circumstances, as might easily be shewn? And yet how is all disregarded with the most? How few obey this, that was one of his last injunctions to his followers, before he offered up himself on their behalf, that they should feed.

feed on his Body and Blood here represented, and remember and love him, who was bruised and poured forth as an Attonement for them, and set themselves against the sins that occasioned all this. Can men be

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9. If then Christ be so far from your thoughts, that you take no pleasure in the Remembrance of him, B. think you before-hand how you will be able to look him in the face, when you will be cited to appear before him whether you will or not. Be affured, who ever thou art, to whom the memory of Christ is no ways delightful, to thee his presence will be most terrible. If thou hast been well pleafed to have him as absent from thy heart, as his bodily presence is from the World, thou wilt never know how to abide the terrour of his appearance, and yet abide it It will then be with thee just as it was with thou must. that wicked Servant whom we read of Luk. 12. 45. 46. who instead of looking to his Masters Family in his absence, to give them their portion of Meat in due feafon, as he was commanded, ver. 42. thinks within himself, that his Lord delays his coming, and therefore begins to eat and drink, and be drunken, and what follows? Why the Lord of that Scruant will come in a day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware, and will cut bim in funder, and appoint him his portimwith bypocrites and unbelievers. Even thus may it thou justly expect it will be with thee, who neglectest to take that portion of meat for thy Soul which Christ hath protided for thee, and hadft rather pamper thy flesh, and indulge it in gluttony and drunkenness. That very Jelus, whom thou takest no pleasure to remember, and could'st be very well content never to come nearer him, never to behold him, or to have any thing more to do with him, even he shall at length surprize thee by the suddenness of his dreadful appearance. Though

thou would'st not Remember him, yet then thou must thou shalt fee him. Though thou could'it cast him out of thy thoughts, yet thou shalt not be able to avoid his prefence, till he himfelf shall have utterly banish'd thee from Though thou be unmindful of him, yet flatter not thy felf with a conceit that he'll forget this thy unworthy behaviour: no, but he'll remember it, to recompence it on thy own head in that day of his vengeance As his people may farmly build upon it, that he'll never forget their labour of love, so may his enemies be fure, that he will not forget their laziness, and want of love Will it not be fad for thee at that day, to call upon the rocks and mountains to bide thee from his face, and all in vain? And yet is it not just it should be thus with thee, who art now call'd into Christs gracious presence, into the nearest communion with him, and thou runnel away, and willfully hidest thy felf, and will not be perswaded to come in. Alass! Man then expect other usage from Christ than here thou foundest in the day of his patience, whilst he waited to be gracious. He will not come then to offer pardons to the guilty, and to be feech their acceptance of them, and of the Sacraments to feal them: no, but he will then only absolve all those who have already got their pardon, and condemn those who have not: wherefore if thou think it it of any consequence to look Christ in the face with comfortat the last day, now get an acquaintance with him; puton thy wedding Garment of Repentance, Faith, and Love, and come hither to be his Guest: with an humble boldness come and feast with him, yea feed upon him, and let him be made familiar to thy Soul, that his coming may fill thee with joy, and not with horrour.

10. Lastly, if after all admonitions and invitations thou livest in the neglect of this duty, do'st thou not give us too much ground to fear, that thou art no true Christians

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Iknow it is not thy coming hither on any fashion that will sufficiently prove thee a good Christian; but yet thy total forbearance may rather make thee suspected to be none at all. For what hast thou to plead on thy own behalf? the greatest argument of thy Christianity is thy being baptized: but this was done in thy infancy, and who knows, whether thou stand it to it or not, it thou wilt not publickly own that thou doft so? It it was the custom amongst us, that when a Father is listed into an Army, he should set down the names of his Sons alfo, there to stand till they came to fixteen years of age, at which time they were to go in, and write their own Names, or else to be cashiered; If they, when they are come to these years, should refuse to give in their Names, do they not hereby thew that they have no mind to be Souldiers? And isit not a question whether thou ownest Christ Jesus for thy Captain, if thou wilt not make thy appearance with the rest, at times appointed for the acknowledgment of thy relation to him? If the King should command all that were of age in a Town, to come to the Market place, and there take the Oath of Allegiance, if they would be held for good Subjects, how would they be look'd upon, who should stay away and refuse to do it? Now have I not before shewn, how express the command of Christ is to all his Disciples, that, beside all other duties, being rightly prepared, they should celebrate this Sacrament intemembrance of him, as an evidence and Symbol of their relation to, and communion with him? How then can we hold them for true Disciples, that reject and light it? But here give me leave, according to my promise, to meet with two or three Objections against the performance of this duty, before I come to give Directions for it.

CHAP.

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CHAP. XII

Sacraments are not to be accounted vain, because Externals.

1. Obj. PErhaps then some in the first place may say, What need have we of such outward shadows or ceremonies, so long as we have the substance, Christ himself, and do truly believe in him? What good can we get by such external services as these? These are sow beggerly things, not suited to these more spiritual times of the Gospel.

Though I have before faid enough to this, yet because there are those who confidently talk at this rate, and are very busie in perverting common people, Ishall

fay fomething farther by way of answer to it.

Ans. 1. And first I would demand of you, who is fit to be Judg in this case, what you ought to do, and what not? Are you Servants, or are you your own Masters? Came the Word of God forth from you? Was Christian Religion something of your devising, that you may frame it, and appoint the duties of it as you shall fee best? Or came this Word to you only? Did he who revealed it to the World priviledge you to pick and chule some duties, and omit others, as you faw good? If you say yes, pray produce your license, and let us see it; for we find no fuch thing recorded in that Word, which weal acknowledge to come from God. And if you have got any private orders contrary thereto, give us fufficient evidence to prove them of Divine Authority, and then we shall be filent. But till then it must needs be accounted strange impudence, for filly worms to quarrel with the institutions of infinite wisdom. For if God's authority may be regarded, rather than the fond opinon of proud and giddy men, we need not be to feek what to

do in this matter, Christ having so plainly commanded us, do this in remembrance of him, to as I have before shewed.

2. And fince there is such a command, I wonder how it can be accounted an unprofitable thing to obey it? Is there no profit in pleasing God? And can we please him any other way, than by obeying his commands? Let the matter of the command be what it will, if we know it be given us by God, that's warrant enough for our practise, & ground for our expectation of benefit by it, though we could not much see the reason of the thing init self abstracted from the command, (though here the case is otherwise, as I have also before manifested.)

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3. If any should say now we lie under no obligation to this duty, let them shew where Christ's command to his Disciples is repealed, or where there is the least intimation given, that there was a time to come when it should be out of date, and cease to oblige our Consciences. Nay, are we not taught there was no such time to come? For do we not find the reason and end of this Ordinance assigned to be such, as will make it necessary to the last day? And this is to prevent all exception plainly exprest; Hereby you show forth Christ's death till be come, 1 Cor. 11.26.

4. Do not they who tell us the Sacraments are but shadows, and therefore now to cease, hereby pretend a new dispensation of the Gospel, purer and higher than that which was set up by Christ and his Apostles after the ceasing of the Levitical Worship? For long after this, we find Baptism and the Lord's Supper in use. Wherefore if they are now to be laid aside, is it not because that was but an Infant-state of the Church, wherein such ceremonies were requisite, which are now needless, it being grown to greater maturity, and the members engaged to be more spiritual, and taken off from

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those carnal services, wherein such mean persons as the Apostles and their followers were conversant? But do not they notoriously violate the truth, as well as modefty, who tell us this? Do we either in the old Testa. ment, or new, meet with any Prophefies, that intimate to us a new dispensation, or different way of ordering the Christian Church, after Christ had fully established it? We find such frequently as to the Jewish Ceremonies, but no where, that I know, relating to any Lawsor Orders that Christ hath appointed. And none; I hope, will fay our Sacraments were like them, of a typical nature, and so to cease by the coming in, and accomplishment of somewhat which they fignified. Though the first dispensation under Moses, was imperfect, yet where are we allowed to find fault with the fecond introduced by Christ? Is not this Gospel-state the Kingdom that cannot be moved, in opposition to the Jewish state of things, which was shaken and removed? as we may probably interpret, Heb. 12.26, 27. Wherefore they who would make us believe that in these latter days the Church is to be reformed, not onely from the corruptions men brought in; but from the Ordinantes which Christ fet up, what do they but trouble us, by endeavouring to prevert the Gospel of Christ? approaching too near to those, whom the Apostle so vehemently pronounced accurfed, Gal. 1.9. Those indeed would have brought in customs which Christ had abrogated, and these would abrogate such as he hath ordained; and when we remember who ordained them, it may fufficiently awe us from flighting them, though they may feem but leffer matters, and, as it were, appendages to Religion. And it should make all sober Christians the more afraid, of hearkning after any new and more spiritual dispensations of the Gospel, when we remember the unspeakable mischief, which this ground

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groundless pretence hath done, and may do to the Church. Under the notion the Familists vent their horrid fancies; and even Mahomet himself made use of this pretence, when he first set up in the World: and so any man that hath a mind to advance some new way, which he can find no ground for in the Gospel, may pretend that it is something higher and more excellent than Christ thought sat first to reveal, but now in these last days he hath sent him as his Messenger to publish it to the World. And as well may we hearken to any such Imposture as to those who tell us, that though, it's true, Christians at the first were Baptized, and received the Lord's Suppen, yet now we have nothing to do with these things, being arrived to a more perfect state than they were acquainted with.

How unreasonable is it, that they should oppose those those which so well agree together, and mutually promote each other? whilst they say they believe in Christ, and therefore regard not this piece of outward Service. But I wonder where they find, that faith in Christ may excuse a man from receiving the Sacrament. I should think it rather engaged him to it. be it from me to press this duty, as that which will give men the least dispensation to neglect any other; nay, I hope I have fufficiently shewed all along, that I press it as a strong obligation, motive and help to holines, both of heart and life. Hither should men come purpolely to exercise and strengthen their Graces; and therefore it's a most foolish thing to fay they have got Grace in their hearts, and will thereupon stay away. If you believe in Chrite come hither and profess that you doso, for so he hath bidden you to do; ; and be not so ridiculous as to fay, because you have faith, therefore you will not in this manner profess in If a King should command all his Subjects that would go to fuch a 04

War, to come and set down their Names, and afterwards come and answer to them at a Mustering, would it not be a wife piece of business, for any of them to fav. he would fight in the War, and therefore he would not have his name fet down, nor appear with the rest at the times of Mustering? And is it not much-what the fame for any to pretend they'll keep Covenant with Christ, and therefore will not make or renew it in that folemn manner he hath commanded? What? wilt thou fay thou lovest Christ, and art sincerely thankful for his love, and therefore wilt not joyn with thy Fellow-Christians, in the remembrance of his mercy and expression of thy Gratitude? Does this found like rea-And yet no better is to be found in thy obje-Might not the Apostles far better have said. they needed not the help of this Sacrament, to put them in mind of Christ, who was ever fresh in the boughts? But on the contrary, because he was so much in their thoughts, therefore they were fo frequent in this duty. And was thy Spirit like theirs, thy practife would not be so contrary. And let me tell thee farther, its much to be feared, thou hast little or no Grace at all, who flightest any way that Christ hath ordained, for the increase of Grace. A wise man useth nor to say, I enjoy my health well, and therefore I care not for my food, fince this is the means for continuance of his health. But it feems thou denieft, that thou can'l get any good by this Ordinance, wherefore,

6. In the next place let me ask thee, Dost thou imagine thy self arrived to the utmost pirch of perfection, so that thou lookest upon all means and Ordinances as things below thee? If so, I cannot now stand to shew thee the pride and ignorance of this concert, which are both so great, that it's danger thou wilt not be convinced of either. But wast thou indeed so excellent a crea-

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ture as thou takest thy self to be, yet methinks thou should'st not imagine, that thou art above the exercise of Grace, or returning thanks for what thou hast received, and even these reasons may bring thee to the duty I am now pleading for. Or if this be none of thy conceit, do'ft thou imagine that the Soul can get no good by external means, which work upon the senses? If this be thy opinion, thou feemest not to consider the nature and frame of man in this present state, wherein bodily things do so mightily affect him, and he is beholden to his senses for all, or almost all the knowledge which he hath. By this reason men could profit nothing by reading or hearing, which is fo contrary to all experience. And by this reason in the time of the Law no good was to be got by those Ceremonies, that typified Christ to come, which is a very bold affertion, and most unreasonable; and I hope the clearer representations of him, and his benefits in our Sacraments, have much the advantage of those darker shadows.

when Christ hath chosen to deal with us in such a sensible manner, as he saw most suitable to our natures, for us thereupon to call his Wisdom and Goodness in quession? When he calls to us to offer our bodies, as well as souls to him, and to glorishe him both with Soul and body, shall we say he cares not for bodily service, and there-upon neglect all those services, wherein the body is employed? And when he out of indulgence to our weakness, hath provided external helps meet for us, shall we think our selves too high for them? Is not this most vile pride and ingratitude? And consider whatever we dare to speak in Disparagement of Christ's Ordinances, as if they were empty useless things, will be found to reflect soul, upon the honour of Christ him-

felf the Law-giver.

Where do we find any of the pious Jews before Christ's time, complaining of their Ceremonies as burdensome, unprofitable things? Afterwards indeed, when they were maintained in opposition to Christ, whom they led to, and ended in, they are call'd beggarly Elements, and carnal Ordinances; but we hear not of this language before. Though then God frequently expres'd his very little regard to them, compared to the more substantial duties of the Moral Law, yet where read we that any of the Godly of those days rejected or disused them? And what, is our bondage sorer than theus? Hath Christ put a yoak upon his Disciples heavier than he took off? and what do they better than fay thus, who throw off his gracious inflitutions, asa burden too heavy for them to bear?

9. Methinks this is so like the language of Infidels. that all who have any mind to be thought Christians should abhor it. What wonder would it be for an Infidel to laugh at Baptism, or the Lords Supper, if he should see them administred, and ask what Good was to be got with washing with water, or receiving a little Bread and Wine? But for one who pretends to own the Authority of Christ, to speak after the same manner, feems fomething strange. If God give a command to wash in Fordan for the cure of a Leprosie, it beseems none but a Heathen Naamen, to ask whether Abana and Pharphar, Rivers of Damascus, are not as good as the Waters of Ifrael. And he discovers little more Religion, who shall faucily demand, why Bread and Wine at his own Table will not do his Soul as much good, asat the Sacrament.

16. I would fain know of these men, whether Christ had power to appoint an Ordinance of this kind, to the use of which, Christians in all succeeding General tions should be oblig'd? If they grant he had, as I supenerl W

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pose they dare not deny it, then let them say what he should have said or done more to lay this obligation upon them, than he hath done in the present case. If again they find fault with the nature of this Ordinance. as if it was not fuited to be perpetual, because of its unprofitableness, let them tell when it begun to be fo. Was it from the first Institution? or after a certain time? If from the beginning, what was it ordained for? Why would Christ set up an Ordinance that was good for nothing? And why were the Disciples so frequent in it? If afterwards, let them name the time, and give the reason of its degeneracy. But farther, was Christ able to make this Sacrament profitable to those. who should conscientiously attend upon it? They who fay it was not, must not take it ill to be thought Infidels: but if they yield he was, then let them alledge fome reason why he would not, or rather let them shew wherein he hath been wanting to it, to make it so profitable: If these fault-finders might have been at the first appointment hereof, what a kind of one would they have had it, that it might have been more useful than now they Judge it is? Is not the death of Christ here fet out before our eyes? and may not that in some fort affect us, supposing we know the design of it, as well as discourses that reach our ears? may not this awake us to lively thoughts of Christ, of the reason and ends of his death, and fo quicken us to the exercise of repentance and faith, and stir us up to desire after him, and to thankfulness for his love? and when our Souls are wrought into fo good a trame, may we not reasonably expect larger communications of Grace from that overflowing fountain of Goodness, who requires nothing more than a right disposition in us that we may be made partakers of his bounty. Not to mention how ht a way this is, for the conferring a right to, and giving affu-

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rance of relative and future priviledges.

11. Besides the Example of those in the first ages of the Church, methinks the daily experience of the generality of fober Christians may abundantly confute this conceit, that there is no good to be got by frequenting the Lord's Table; were these demanded one by one whether they had not found the contrary, I believe the most of them would profess they had; though through their own fault they would acknowledge, they had not hereby profited fo much as they might. How many poor Souls have come i. hither heavy and dull, and have gone away enlivened? I. w many have come dejected and fad, and have gone away refresh'd and chear'd, and have long after enjoyed the benefit of this duty? But if they who make this objection, never found any fuch thing, it would speak more modesty and justice too, to lay the blame on themselves, rather than on the means which Christ hath afforded them.

12. Lastly, I would defire all that are impartial, to consider, how plainly God hath witness'd against this sort of men, who are the chief patrons of that opinion I oppole, in suffering them to be so infatuated and besotted in their own minds; that, whilft they have impudently dar'd to reject the Ordinances of Christ as needless things, they themselves have doted upon the most ridiculous inconsideradle trifles, as if they were matters of some huge consequence. Have not those very men, who cry down the Lord's Supper and Baprim, of one fort or other, befide many other duties, as formal things, yet with a great deal of earnestness call'd upon us to fay, thou rather than you, to a fingle person, not to call Men Master, nor put off our Hats one to another, with a multitude the like Foppsries? These it seems are substantial things which they have devised, whilst Christ's own appointments are empty and carnal What's s of

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What's this but a mark set upon them, (and sew Sects are without one) to let the World know they came not from God, that none who are considerative might be endangered by their delusions? And let this suffice for Answer to the first Objection; whereon I have been the larger, in that it is of such ill consequence, and hath too far spread it self amongst giddy unstable people.

CHAP. XIII.

Against too seldom communicating in the Sacrament.

2. Obj. N the next place some may say, We have already received the Sacrament, and so have satisfied the command of Christ, and therefore may be excused from it for the future.

I should scarce have dream'd of such an Objection, had I not heard it us'd; but to dispatch it in two words.

1. I have before acknowledg'd, that Christ hath not told us how frequently, or how oft in our lives we must perform this duty, but yet we may learn from the words of the Apostle, i Cor. 11. 26. That it is to be done more than once: for saith he, As often as you eat, &c. i.e. every time that you eat. And then I have shew'd you what was the practice of the first Christians, which may well hold the place of a Rule in this case. Wherefore you ought to obey the injunction of your Pastor, so oft as he shall in prudence think meet to call you to the Lord's Table, since you have so much reason for obedience, and none to alledge for your refusal.

2. And in the next place, pray tell me, had you any reason for this duty when you sirst performed it? you'll scarce say no, I suppose; and if you had any, then I ask, whether the same reason does not still continue? If it

does,

does, why should not your practise be continued agreeably thereto? Have you not still some necessities of soul which may here be supplied, as well as you had then? Is not the death of Christas well worthy your remembrance now as formerly? and if you heretofore received any advantage by what you did, methinks you should be the more inclin'd to hold on therein. But here perhaps some may reply, putting the objection in another shape, that they have often attended on this Ordinance, and yet have sound no advantage by it, and therefore being out of heart and hope, are ready to

throw it quite off. To whom I answer

I. If it be thus indeed, you have great reason to acknowledge the fault is you own. Either you have not been fo dilgent in your preparations as you ought, or else you have been careless afterward, thinking you had done when the work was over, as if no more was required to make a Sacrament strengthning to your Souls, than to make food nourishing to your bodies; barely to receive it, and there's an end; when as there is a serious consideration of what you have done, and a conflant watchfulness afterwards, necessary to make it beneficial to you, as I may have occasion to she was non. And especially see if you give no kind of allowance to fome pleafant fin or other, which you are hardly willing to be quite delivered from; fuch a fecret partial cherishing of any lust whatever, will be fure to keep you low and barren, and render all means unprofitable. And thus it is also like to be with you, if you are swallowed up in worldly business, or do roo sweetly relish any sensible enjoyment.

2. You who complain you can get nothing by Sacraments, will say the same, I suppose by other means and duties; and will you therefore cast off these too? Will you lay aside hearing and praying upon this pre-

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tence? you may as well: for the reason holds as good for one as the other.

3. But farther, I would have you beware of mistaking your felves, imagining that you profit not when you do. And therefore confider what your expectations have been, and what you have found. Perhaps you have expected great joys, and as it were, sensible assurances of God's love, and to be afterward freed from all troubles and doubtings? or you have expected a perfect freedom from some troublesome temptations wherewith you use to be haunted, and from the very first motions of fin in your felves; and because you have found none of this in those measures you look'd for, therefore you conclude you have met with nothing? But this is no right arguing: for thefe are priviledges that you may go without all your days, and yet thrive under the means too; and therefore by them you cannot judg of your profiting but if you can find the strength of fin broken, and your heart more fet against it, and you are more throughly perswaded to comply with the whole will of God, being firmly refolved to keep close to him to the last, discovering more and more the emptiness of all creatures, and his All-fufficiency, being more prevalently and steadily bent to chuse him as your onely portion; if it be fo, you may be fure you grow in Grace, and are bettered by the means you enjoy, and may be therefore encouraged to continue in the use of them. boo no.

A. But lastly, however it be with you, yet be you patient and constant in doing your work, and then leave the event to God. Wherein upon examination you find you have been wanting to your selves, be more careful for the future, in the due preparing and managing of our own hearts, and so wait upon God in his appointed way. Let your desires be carried out after that which

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which is most needful for you, and which God hath promised to give, chiefly after Grace, and secondarily after comfort, remembring all you have is to come from the free mercy of a wife God, to whom you must refer it what measures of these you shall receive, and how soon Onely, I say, let it be your bufiness quietly it shall be. to wait his leasure, in the use of those means he hath prescribed you, for which I might give many reasons: but I shall wave all, onely demanding of you, whether those spiritual blessings you so carnestly long after are worth the waiting for? If you fay no, you deferve to go for ever without them: but if you grant they are then pray tell me, whether it is more likely to attain them by waiting in that way wherein they are to be found. or by turning out of it? This, I hope, is no difficult case to resolve. If your friend be gone a journey, and you have a mind to meet him upon his return, are you not more likely to meet with him, by holding on still in that Road which he'll be fure to come, than by going back again, or turning to some by-path, meerly to gratifie your laziness or impatience? Wherefore when your hopes are at the lowest ebb, it is most unreasonable and foolish, to cry with that wicked King, Why (hould we wait on the Lord any longer? there is no hope wherefore let us leave our duties, and cast aside all. Be sure there is no hope in fuch a course as this, but rather a certainty of periffing, whereas if there be fafety in any way, it is in an obedient patient dependance upon God, yea, in this way there is certain fafety; embrace it therefore as your wifest, your onely course. Do but see that you wait for the Lord, and affure your selves you shall not be ashamed, your eyes shall not always fail. Get into the Pfalmist's frame, Pfalm 130.5, 6. To wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, and at length shall the Lord manifest himself to the joy of your

your Souls, as fure as the morning light will appear to those who watch for it.

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CHAP. XIV.

The Objection of unfitness answered. As proposed by the doubting and the careless.

that will be ready to say, They find themsilves unfit for the Sacrament, and therefore dare not come
less it prove to their burt, rather than to their advantage.
Several sorts of persons may upon different grounds
raile this objection. First, the sincere and humble Christian, whose soul is in the dark, and through ignorance
of himself y or not considering the tenour of the Covenant, and through the prevalency of temptation, or melancholly, he may without reason condemn himself, as
if his estate was worse than it is. To these I have something to say.

1, Why is it , you judge your felves unfit for this Ordinance? Is it because you are not so qualified as I have before thewn all Communicants ought to be? I am confident, upon a true enquiry, you will find the contrary: Wherefore be not halty and rash in passing a censure upon your selves, as if you were resolved to comply with the delign of Satan to keep you in forrow; but examine things foberly, and without passion, and then give judgement upon your state according to true evidence. If you be found faithful Disciples, and unteigned lovers of Christ, you will grant your selves meet to come to that Feast which is made for such. Tell me then in one word; are you not from your very Souls, willing that Christ should be your Saviour, and take his own course with you to bring you to God in Glory? Is there

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there any thing in all the world that your heart is fet more upon than this, even that you may be faved by Jesus Christ? would you not account the assurance of this a richer mercy, than to be made owners of the whole World? Yea, would you not give a thousand firch Worlds as this if you had them, for the love of God in Christ? Is not this it which lies heaviest upon your Spirits, and makes you walk fo fadly, even the fears lest you are without true Grace, and should go without God and Christ for ever? And yet can the Devil so befool you, as to perswade you all this while that you love not God? Have you got any thing here below more dear to you than this favour? Do you take delight in any course that you know is displeasing to him? Do you not long to be made more conformable to him? To know and love, and enjoy him more, and do him better fervice in the world? Would it not be the great joy of your Souls always to walk elofely with him, and retain a flong fense of his presence, and all his excellencies upon your minds? To converse with him more feelingly and powerfully, and in all your approaches to him, to be filled with a furtable reverence, humility, feriousness, and all holy affections? Would any thing please you mote than to pleafe your God? Are you not then best at ease when you find your hearts most enlarged, and carned out after him? Had you not rather be following ther God in the ways of holines, and the duties of Religion, than to enjoy all the pleasures and merriments of fenfual ones? Is there any duty from which you would be dispensed with? Any command that you would have abolished? Had you not infinitely rather your heart was brought up to the fullest compliance with it? Have you any lust which you would fain be allowed to keep? Is it a trouble to you, that you must part with your less or elfe be damned for them? Or rather, Is it not your greatest 3000

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greatest trouble, that you lived so long without God, and did so much against him in the days of your unregenefacy? And if you had that time to pass over again, would you not prefer a life of the greatest suffering before such a life of sinning? And is not your Soul really burdened with those remnants of corruptions which you yet feel in your felves? Do you not frive against them; and earnestly defire to be rid of them? Would you not account it a bleffed priviledge, to be more free from ignorance, pride, earthliness, distrust, self-will, dullhels, and distractions in holy duties? Would not a dehverance from these be more welcome, than to be freed from any outward afflictions you may lie under? All you that are fincere (and to fuch only am now fpeaking) cannot but acknowledge that the frame of your fouls is fuch as I have been enquiring after, how harfuly foever you may conclude of your felves notwithstanding. And if such as you, that love God and holines, hate fin, and are humbled for it, have not right to the promises of mercy through Christ, I wonder who have? Why therefore will you not come to receive the feal to those promises which do so evidently belong to you or none? But after all, perhaps you'll cry, you cannot believe, and therefore dare not come hither fince this is a Sacrament provided for believers only.

This Objection, I suppose, ariseth principally from your mistake of the nature of saving faith. Wherefore tell me, I pray, what do you mean when you say, you cannot believe. Do you not really believe, that the witness which the Scripture gives of Christis true? What ever temptations you may have to insidelity, yet is not this the prevalent perswalion of your minds, that Jesus Christis the true Messiah, by whom the fallen world is to be recovered out of its ruins? Do you not believe here furnished with full power and authority

to accomplish his defign. Do you not believe that his death was sufficient for the ransom of the World, and all other truths concerning him that you find revealed in the Gospel? And then are you not resolved that this Jesus shall be your Saviour, and none but he? Do you not from your hearts acknowledg your felves miferable lost creatures, altogether unable to restore your selves, or to do any thing that may satisfie God's justice, or in it self deserve recompence or acceptance? So that you are convinc'd, if ever you are fav'd, it must be through Christ; and are not you earnestly desirous of this above all things, that God for his Son's fake would pardon and fave you? Yea, more than that, are you not fincerely willing that Christ should rule in your hearts, and guid you by his Spirit, and frame you according to his will? Do you not account his commands holy, just, and good? And do you not delire strength from him your head to obey them, and to conquer all temprations from within and without that would draw you aside? Do you not believe the promises, which he hath unde, and the threatnings which he hath denounc'd to be certainly true? And do you not delire more, that you may have a share in these promises, than enjoy any created good? And do you not fear his threatned wrath, more than any outward fufferings? Is it thus with you, as I am confident it is , and yet will you cry out that you cannot believe? What can you not be lieve? Why, alas! you cannot believe you thall ever be fav'd by Jesus Christ. Is that it then which your belief onely Ricks at? But suppose it does, you are not therefore presently Unbelievers in Scripture-stile, or in God's account. For this is not that which is to much prest upon you: observe well the language of the Golgel, which runs thus, Believe in Ckrist, and thou shall be the day of the golgel, which runs thus, Believe in Ckrist, and thou shall be the golgel, which runs thus, Believe in Ckrist, and thou shall be the golgel, and the g Aved, not believe that thou halt be faved by Christ. This ablo-

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absolute perswafion of thy own salvation is not somuch enjoyned thee, however not in the first place, but rather thy acceptance of Christ, that thou mayst be saved by him. And yet methinks, if thou weigh things well, thou mayft be rais'd to fuch well grounded hopes of thy own particular happiness, as may very much conquer these doubtings and fears, which thou complainest of under the name of unbelief. For let me ask thee seriously, why is it thou canft not believe thou shalt be faved by Christ? It is not, I know, because thou doubtest of the sufficiency of his satisfaction, or of the truth of his promises, or the graciousnes of his nature. For art thou not fully perswaded, that he will fave all those who truly believe in him? I make no doubt but thou art: wherefore hence it is plain, that thy fears of perishing arise from an opinion, that thou art not a true Believer. But this from thy own acknowledgements. I have made evident that thou art I whilft thou believest that Christis the onely Saviour of Mankind, and art as willing he should take away thy firs from thee, as prevent wrath from falling upon thee. So that it is rather for want of a clear knowledge of thy felf, than for want of faith in the promises that thou canst so hardly believe thou shalt be faved. Wherefore once again I ask thee, art thou not willing, that Christ should deliver thee, both from the dominion and condemnation of fin? If thou art, and wals shew it, by using the means he hath afforded for this end, then be affured, thou art a true believer, and as fuch shalt be own'd and crown'd by the Lord that bought thee. And therefore with great alacrity come along with thy fellows, to the thankful remembrance of that eternal redemption obtain'd for you, by the blood which ratified the everlasting Covenant betwixt God and his people. . 2. Whatever your weaknefles, corruptions, temp.

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tations are, let them not detain you from; but rather fend you with more speed to this Ordinance: For you know not but that may be the means, which God will bless for the removal of them. And take this for a certaintruth, whilst you have no fin, but what is the burden of your Souls, and which you labour and long to be freed from, you have no fin that makes you unfit for the Sacrament: nay more, this your sense of sh makes you rightly fitted for it. And then there is less ground of doubt, as to the fears and fadness you may labour under, or any temptations with which you are troubled: You cannot fure be so weak, as to think your felves upon any of these accounts unmeet for your Lord's Table: For you must remember, he never made this the qualification of his Guests, that they should come wanting nothing, but he calls hither the necessitous to fupply their wants. You come not hither onely to be thankful for what you have received, but to receive farther what your Souls fland in need of. You would think he argued at a very fifty rate that should tell you, you must not go to a feast till your hunger was satisfied, nor come to the fire, till you'are warm: and yet no better is the Sophistry of Satan, whereby he would perswade you, that whilst you feel so many imperfections cleave to you, and lie under fuch great doubtings, you mult Itay away from the Sacrament; when as this is one means appointed by God for your relief: here's both Phylick and Food administred to the fick and fainting. And God may take this feafon of revealing himself to you, and fatisfying those doubts which you could no other way get rid of. Thus hath it been with many a Soul, why may it not be fo with you also?

which you find with your felves, yet do you not hold on in the performance of other duties? To instance in

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one, do you not use to pray constantly? If you do, why then then will you not be brought to this work alfo? For affure your felves, if you be fuch whose Prayers are acceptable to God, your receiving will be acceptable alfo. Without a dependance upon Christ the Mediator, and a resolution to conform your selves to the will of God, your very Prayers will be loathsome; but if these things be in you, all your services will be wellpleasing to him. Wherefore beware of pretending so much reverence for this Ordinance, and so much necesfity for preparation, that least you should not demean your selves as you ought, you will wholly neglect it: for fure you cannot think this according to your Masters will, that you should run away from your work, for fear of miscarrying in it. Nor pretend that this is of a nature so much different from all other duties, that whill you may do them, you may not be admitted to this, since, if you be sincere and hearty in one as well sanother, endeavouring to improve them to the end for which they were appointed, even to get nearer to God thereby be fure you shall be accepted in all. Moreover bethink your felves what you would have done, bad you liv'd in the first ages of the Church, when the Christiants were wont for the most part, at every time of their assembling, to have a Sacrament. Would you then have ordinarily with-drawn from them? Or would you not rather have contented your felves with that measure of preparation, that you had then been capable of making. Though think not that I am this while encouraging you to lazines, or to rush heedlesly and inconsiderately hereupon: no, be as diligent as ever you are able, to prepare your selves for so near an agproach to the great God, but yet be not fo over-scrupulous as to keep back from the Ordinance, or make your coming less profitable, through excessive fears. 0 4 And

And remember still, that the babitual devotedness of the Soul to God, express'd in constant beliness of life, is the best qualification for this and every other performance:

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4. Lastly, one would think you of all prious should not be guilty of refusing your presence here, where there is a commemoration made of the love of your dearest Lord. I speak to you that are serious Christians, well may others slight this duty, if you that lie underso great engagements to it, will be kept back by any Ordinary pretences. You are such that are somewhat acquainted with the greatness of that mercy, manifested in the Redemption of the World, and will you be easily detained from shewing forth that death, which procured it? You are persons tender of your Master's honour, and sensible of your own duty: shew then that you are so, by obeying his command, and preserving the esseem due to his sacred Ordinances, by your constant reverent attending upon them.

Others there are, that may complain of their unitness, who find themselves at a loss in their preparations for this duty, which yet they are very willing to set about, and are desirous of instructions for their right performance of it. For these especially I have reserved some Directions, to which I shall come pre-

fently.

But there are a third fort, those the worst, and, I feat, the most, who will confess they are unfit for the Sacrament, and therefore will by no means be drawn to it, but will tell you, though they are not fit now, yet here after they hope they shall be; whilst in the mean time there are no signs of any preparation they make: for come to them one Month or Year after another, still they are in the same posture, and use the same excuses. Now the very plain case of these persons, I take to be this.

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this; So much knowledge they have, that they are convinc'd no man ought to come to the Sacrament, who is not firmly refolved to forfake his fins, and to become a new man, if before he have been a careless liver; and yet their Consciences tell them, that such and such sins they are guilty of, which they cannot endure to think of parting with, and fuch and fuch duties they believe they ought to fet upon, which yet they have no mind to; and therefore fo much modely they have, that they will not come to bind themselves to that which they are not refolved todo; and this While they fancy to themselves, that their case is something beter than if they should go and make promises of amendment, and soon after break them; and are apt to conceit, that they may as yet fafely take somewhat more liberty, than will be lawful for them, when once they have taken the Sucrament, whereby they imagine they should be strangely hampered and tied to a strictness which they have no liking to : But yet hereafter, when they have tasted a little more of the pleasures of the world, they intend to betake themselves to such a course, and then they'll be constant at Sacraments, and as devout as may be, this they promise to themselves. I dare appeal to the Consciences of many, whether such as these have not been their thoughts. Reader, have they not been thy own? And commonly it is either tippling or wantoness, or love to an idle and jobly life, and a liftlefness to all pains and diligence in Spiritual affairs, and a misapprehension of ferious holines, as if it was a most troublesome rigid thing, that are the ordinary causes of these, and most mens continuance at a distance from godliness, and make them so backward to devote themselves entirely to God. Now these I consess are not to be called immediately to the Sacrament, but seriously to be dealt with in order to their recovery, from those senfual

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fualinclinations, and wretched delutions, which render them to unfit for, and averte from it; to which purpose ferve the former exhortations to Repentance and Faith, whereon I staid to long. Onely I shall here discover to them two dangerous mistakes, wherewith they from willing to impose upon themselves, and which chiefly hinder the performance of their duty.

The first is, a concest that they may take some kind of liberty, for a loose conversation, before they have bound themselves to the conversition, by the Salcrament, which thereupon they are much more backward to

Now first I shall grant, that hereby a farther obligation is laid upon them , to the greatest watchfulnels a gainst fin, and to a faithful difcharge of their Duryto God, in the whole of their lives; and the wilful violation of foleran engagements renders fin much more hainous: Wherefore it hath been my care all along to make you understand, that it is not so much the bare Receiving that I would perswade you to, as to get your Touls into afitness for the work, and to do it in a right manner. And once again let me warn you, as you love your Souls, not to come hither in love with your fins, or without resolutions to turn from every evil way. Be it known to you, God will be fanetified in those that draw mear him, and will feverely punish irreverence & profane rudenels, in those that pretend to his solemn worship and fervice, as you may see in that terrible instance of Nadaband Abibu, Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. And for unworthy receiving of the Lord's Supper, the Apolle tells the Corintbians, For this very cause many were weak and fickly among ft them, and many falmafleep; and because they would not judg themselves, therefore God judged them, I Cor. 11. 30, 31. He's an holy God, and commands all those to be holy, that hope for acceptancem their approaches to him. And he's a God that fearches

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the heart. so that there's no hope of deceiving him. Wherefore stand off, all you that have delign'd to perfift one Moneth or Week longer in your rebellions against the Soveraign Majesty. Dare not to offer so great an affront to him, as to thrust in among his Subjects, whilst thou art a resolved Traytor, as if thou would'st make a tryal, whether he could difcern thee in that croud. He's a jealous God, and will not endure to be fo tempted; and sooner or later be fure thy Sin shall find thee out of then thou dislikest the holy Laws and Government of Christ, take not an Oath in a mockery, that thou wilt be subject to him, which before-hand thou intendest not to keep. Here's no jesting or dallying? beware how thou playest with edg-tools. These are setious things, wherefore either be ferious and fincere in thy medling with them, or keep at a distance Avoid, Ifay, all you loathfome defiled finners, that are in love with your filth, and will not be washed and cleansed; whilst this is your posture, you are no way fit to sit at the Table of the King of Glory, there to feast with his beloved Friends, whom he hath purified and made meet for his fellowship and favour.

But perhaps you'll presently reply, you like all this well enough, this is that you would have, and you agree with me to stay away, as perceiving your own unfitness. And are you indeed resolved to stay away, and to continue in this unprepared posture, as thinking you have hereby son a more dispensation for a careless ungodly life than others have? Alas! poor wretches, how willing you are to be cheated into misery? And how desirous do you seem of a freedom to do your selves the greatest mischies? But a little to undeceive you, let me assure all you that live upon this Earth, and are endued with reason, whether you will bind your selves to God by this Sacrament or not; there lie so many other in dispen-

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fable engagements on you to his Service, that you have not the least liberty more than others to rebel against him: and that will sufficiently appear, if you do but consider these two things.

1. The relation wherein you naturally and necessarily

stand to God.

2. Your more express and profest obligation to him.

For the first, Consider, Are you not his creatures and he your maker? And is not he the upholder of your being, the lengthner of your lives, and the giver of all your mercies? Is he not therefore your Owner and Governeur? Do you not owe your felves, and all you have, to him? And is it not your duty to ferve and obey him, whether you have promifed you will do fo or not? Do you think he hath no title to you, till in some solemn manner you have profest subjection to him? Do you think the service you owe to God, is so purely a freewill offering, that if you will render it you may, and if not, you are in no fault? By this reason God must be much beholden to you for it. What, do not his Laws bind, till you have given your confent? Multhe ask you leave to govern you? Do vou think it is with you in this case, as with a Servant that ows this man of that no duty, till he hath hired himself into his Service? Sure you cannot be fo flupid. But rather will you not yield that from your very birth you are at least as much obliged to obedience to your Maker, as any Child to his Parent? And pray tell me, what would you think of that Child, who, when his Father bid him do any thing, should stubbornly refuse, and tell him he never promised him any such obedience? Would you think this a fatisfactory answer? Do you not easily perceive, that Children are bound to obey their Parents, even by virtue of that relation they stand in to them, though they never enter into any formal engagement

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to be dutiful? Even thus do you stand absolutely bound to obey God, the Father of Spirits, before ever you profess your selves to be his people : And all your professions, though they are as so many farther ties upon you to obedience, yet they give not God any new right to you which before he had not, only hereby you acknowledge his right and promise to render him what is his due. Hence then you may fee what an abfurd conceit it is, that you may any whit more freely fin against God before you have taken the Sacrament, than after. Can you be so sottish, as to imagine, that such excuses as these will serve your turn at that day, when you must be called to render a reason of your doing? When the Gospel first came to the Heathens, I hope you'll grant they were bound to receive it, and yet they had never before given their consent to be rul'd by Christnor had made any Covenant with him. But why ftand Ifo long on a case so plain?

And then take notice farther? that by virtue of this subjection which you owe to God as his creatures, you are bound to express your resolutions to serve him, by what figns, and in what manner he shall appoint you; now he hath commanded you, to express these resolutions by receiving the Lords Supper, as I have before provod: And will you disobey this particular command, and then think, this will excuse you from obedience to the rest. To make the case plain by a like instance: Suppose when the King had commanded all his Subjects to repair to several places in the Kingdom, there totake the Oath of Allegiance, many amongst them thould absent themselves, and refuse to take it, and afterwards should conspire together, and rife up in arms against him, do you think it would excuse them, to plead that they never fwore Allegiance to him? Why fiffit was their fault that they did not, fince they were commanded

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commanded to do it; and then however they were engaged to peace and faithfulness by living in the Kingdom, and receiving protection from their Prince. Even thus will your neglect of Sacraments be charged on you as a fault, for which you had no reason, but will be far from being admitted as an excuse of any other sins, against which you were sufficiently ried, by your living meerly upon God, and receiving all you had from him.

But then in the second place consider, you are already obliged by your own promises and professions, to walk in the fear of the Lord, and therefore have not the least ground to allow your felves in fin, from your not having received the Lords Supper as an engagement against it. For bethink you a little, do you not profess your selves to be Christians? And what's the meaning of that, but that you worship God by Jesus Christ, and acknowledge him to be your Maker and Ruler, and Christ to be your Saviour? And accordingly, are you not devoted to God by Baptism, whereby you stand bound to renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and to be Christ's faithful Servants to your lives end? I confess, you were thus consecrated to God by your Parents in your infancy, when, according to the Law of God, and Nature, they had full power thus to dispose of you: but now you are come to years of discretion, do you consent to what they have done or not? Inplant English do you renounce your Baptism, whereby you stand obliged to be the Servants of God and his Son Christ Jesus? You that I am now speaking to, will, I know, deny this with great earnestness, and cry God forbid that you should be such Apostate wretches, from Christians to turn Heathens and Infidels. Well then, if you acknowledg your felves under the bond of your Baptism, affure your selves, you are hereby as much ned

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ned from the least fin in thought, word, or deed, as you can be by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. What will you do then in this case ? will you dare to run on in those firs from which your Baptism doth bind you. and so renounce it in your practice, whilst you own it in profession? Or will you hereafter be so filly as to abfrain from the Communion, for fear of engaging your felves in an holy life, to which you fland engag'd already by your own confent? If you continue in this mind, it's too plain a fign that in your hearts you difown your Baptism it self: and what a case are you in then? For let me ask you, if you had been born of Heathen Parents, and were but just now come to the understanding of the Christian Religion, and were acquainted what kind of Persons they must be that own'd it, would you be Baptiz'd into this Faith, and hereby profess your resolutions to lead such an boly life, as all Christians are commanded? If you say you would not, hence then it follows, that you dislike your Baptism finceif it was to be done again you would none of its And if indeed you wish your selves, in the case of unbaptized Heathens now, you are really worse than they, and shall be in a worse condition shortly. But if you fay, you would readily be baptized if it was yet to do, then fain would I know, why you are so back+ ward to receive the Lord's Supper, wherein you do but renew the Covenant that is made at Baptism, acknowledging your felves to be true Christians, and promising that you will remain to : what possible reason can you devile for this unwillingness?

Withal take notice, all you that are, baptized into the name and Church of Christ, and do stand to your Baptism, you have hereby bound your selves to be his faithful servants, to obey his commands, and to behave your selves in his Church, as he directs you. Now he

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hath commanded all Christians, that are of capacity, to prepare themselves, and so to receive the Sacrament of his Supper: Do you not clearly perceive then, how your Baptism binds you to this Duty, you being now come to the use of your reason? How is it then that you dare neglect it, whilst you you are so straightly en-

gag'd to it?

And further, blide your own Baptism, every time you bring Children to be baptized, you profess before God and the Congregation, that you renounce the Devil, the World, and the finful lufts of the flesh, that you believe the Articles of the Christian Faith, and will keep Gods holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the fame all the days of your life. And are you fincere in all this? If you are, why should you stay away from the Sacrament, where you are required to profess and promise no more? However, I hope, hence you may be convinc'd, that before you partake of the Lord's Supper, you are fo far bound to an holy life, that you have no allowance for the least fin, any more than you have afterward, which is orsed Heathens now . vo that I am proving.

And this is farther evident by all other duties of Religion, which you perform to God, every one of which ties you to the most exact obt dience to him. I suppose you are not so Atheistical, but that sometimes you pray to God; and when you pray do you not beg of him pardon of sin, and grace to do him faithful service? When you say the Lords Prayer, do you not therein besech God to forgive you your trespasses, and not to lead you into temptation, but deliver you from evil? And what, dare you ask of him forgiveness of Sin, whilst you are resolved to continue in it still? I presume you hope to obtain what you ask, and can you so much as flatter your selves with any hope that God will pardon your fins

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fins whilst you will not for sake them? Hath not hi word plainly told you the contrary? And when you pray to be kept from fin and the power of Satan, is it not to be suppos'd that you desire these things? and doth not the expression of your desires engage you to do what you can to obtain what you pray for? and are you not therefore bound to take heed of fin, to watch against and refist temptations? except you take God for an Idol, and make your prayers in a mockery, as if your fervant should come and entreat you to help him do his work, and then run away, and never fet his hand too't; or as if your Child should pray you to keep him from falling into the water, and should throw himself into it as foon as he had done. Dare you venture thus to play and dally with the Almighty? And when you defire him to fave your fouls, and keep you from Hell, it speaks you resolv'd not wilfully to destroy and damn your felves, or else you are horrid mockers of God. Methinks you should never have the impudence to come near him, or fpeak a word to him, whilft you are fully bent to go on in those waies that are fo contrary and provoking to him. The like I might fay of hearing the word, you are thereby engaged to give obedience to it: for you cannot think fure you ferve God fufficiently by hearing your duty, whilf you fet not about it. And for you to come to hear what God shall fay by his Minister, with a secret purpose to hold on in such and such courses, whatever shall be told you to the contrary, is little less dangerous and damnable, than to come to the Sacrament with such wicked purposes. Let this then suffice to remove your first mistake, that you may take liberty in some sinful wayes you have a mind to before you have taken the Sacrament.

The fecond gross mistake which I find in your objection, is, that you think, though at present you have no

great mind to be so serious, as to set upon preparation for the Sacrament, yet that hereafter you shall, when you have had your swinge a while longer, and have taken a little more pleasure, being as yet perhaps but in the time of your youth, and thereupon you hope that God will bear with you yet a while, since you have such good purposes to become his servants for the time to come.

Should I go about fully to shew you the vanity of this conceit, and your folly in delaying to return to God, I might fill many sheets; wherefore that I may not be tedious. I shall do little more than represent to you the very true language and import of this pretence of yours, that so you may be ashamed of ever using it more, or harbouring it any longer. When you talked staying yet awhile, before you cast of your old companions and courses, and bind your felves to a godly life at the Sacrament, what do you in effect but fay? That when you have contemn'd Gods mercy, and griev'd his Spirita little longer, and done fomewhat more to dishonour his name, then you will betake your selves to him, and become his people; when you have done Satan yet a little more Service, then you'll shake him off, and take Christ for your Master; when you have a while longer trod under foot his precious blood, then it shall wash you from all your fins; when you have run deeper on the score, and added something more both to the number and hainousness of your transgressions, then you'll come for a pardon; when you have done fomewhat more to make God your enemy, then you'll feek reconciliation; when you have let your lufts take deeper rooting, then you'll pluck them up; when you have made them a little stronger, then you'll subbue them; when the fore is festered, then you'll apply the plaister; when the gangreen is almost good

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your vitale, then you'll feek a remedy: Thus foolishly thus prefumptuously and basely do they argue, who think it is too foon yet to come home to God, and be religious in good earnest. I know you would be atham'd to speak thus, and would scarce be perswaded there lodges fo much wickedness in your hearts, but for certain there does, whilff you retain secret purpoles to go on in a way of known fin. Ah poor finner! that thou didft but a little know what thou doeft, whilst thou stands thus unresolved whether thou shouldeff yet bid farewel to thy lufts, and come over heartity to God by Jesus Christ. Oh disingenuous creature! doll thou think thou halt not provokt and dishonour'd thy Maker enough yet? Haft thou not yet fufficiently abuled thy Redeemers grace and patience? Half thou not yet thrown away time enough? and finn'd away mercies and offers enough? Is fin fo fweet and profitable a thing that it should be fo hard to determine whether it was best to be forfaken or not? Is God so hard Maker, and his fervice fuch a burdenforn thing, that finners must be wooded to him with fo much earnestness. and all prove too little with the most? Is it so fafe and defrable a flate to remain still in the gall of bitterness and under the wrath of God? Can you keep off this with which you are plucking upon you? Have you both repentance and time at your own beck? And are you fare of repentance, how long to ever you fray belore, you feek it? will holines be good for you herether, and is it not now ? Or are you afraid of being hippy too flon? wherefore weighthings well. Sirs. and then refolve whether there be any wildom, in delying that work which may be put off too long; but dinor beton quickly done; that work to which in all realon and conficience you fland engaged every hour, wen to be divorc'd from fift and Satari, and firmly be-Mothed

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trothed to the Lord Jesus. How long must be seek and fue for thy consent? Why should he not have thy youth any other ? Doth Satan deserve it better than he? Did not he die for thee in the prime of his years, and why should st not thou live to him whilf thou art young? When wilt thou have put away that wretched disobedient answer, that it's yet too foon to entertain him? Hath he flood knocking for entrance till his locks are wet with the dew of the night, and isit still too foos, to open to him and let him in? Oh beware least thy continued stubbornness should even wear out his patience least thy perverse carriage should provoke him for ever to leave thee; and leak if still thou think it it not time yet to break off thy fins, and fer upon a godly life, he should think it time to cut thee off, and fentence thee to everlasting death. In the mean time know, that all thy good deligns, what thou wilt do , and be hereafter , will not be the least excuse of thy prefent wickedness, nor, make thy cafe any better with God; nay rather, they make it worse, since it appears, thou art convinced in thy Confcience, that thou oughtelt to live after another fathion than thou do it, and yet wilfully neglectest thy acknowledged duty. I hope then I have faid enough to thew that thou half no refuge, no excuse that will hold, whilft thou absented thy self from the Sacrament, out of a lothness as yet to reform thy life, and do the duties to which this would bind thee. Wherefore to conclude the both purpole to continue in any finful course is come to the Lords Table it thought darell in for fair bein from ment The ak one word to encourage thee to torgreat thy fell But yef on the other hand. Go on in the start and the aways litting darest for thou art in day gen every ment of dropping into Hall whill thou remained in fuch a flare. Thou feelf then to what a trat in bring thee, trocked

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thee, so that turn thee which way thou wilt, whilst thou willingly carriest it about thee, an Angel with a starting sword stands full in thy way, threatning destruction, whether thou comest or comess not, whilst thou continuest a resolved sinner, the east is sad and deplorable. But yet one way remains, and but one that I know for the safety, even with all speed to cast away the sins, and change they heart and life: and then come as soon as thou wilt to the Lords Table, there to profess this blessed change, and to consist the self therein. And for the encouragement take notice of two things, or self-starting and the constant the self-starting and the self-starting self-starting and the self-starting self-starting and the self-starting self-starting

113 It is not an absolute fintes perfection that here thou bindest thy felf to even this thou should ft thirst and applieafter, but yet thou are not to be discouraged, if thou never attainer, till thou are taken into fle humber of the Spirits of jult men made perfect! Millake me not as if I was indufiging thee and allowance it and the least fin , ino this list it warn the of this against this thou must covenant in the Sacrament, to wat, against a willing, loving entertainment of any im whatever And that hale be adcounted true to this Obvehalit? If thou bate and ferive against alt, and any hembled wilder the fente of thy remaining imperfections, being far more defirous to be rid of them, than to retain them. And if upon knowledge of any flip of flumble thou Heft again by strue repentance frand recourse to the blood of Shift for mercui and rohis Spilit for fresh fire light. being resolved to take more heed to thy ways for the timetto come. It is here as if thou flood if promite thy thylician, thou would'it be eareful of thy health's this dothnot imply, that thou wilt never be fick more, but yetat implies thus much , that thou wilt not wilfully ring diseases upon thy self, but wilt use the means that are appointed to preserve thy health; and whatever

fickness

fickness cleaves to thee will be thy trouble . and thou wilt defire and endeavour to be freed from it. Even thus art thou bound to regard the health of thy foul, and to look upon fin as a spiritual sickness, and therefore never to fall in love with it , but do thy belt towards its utter removal: Even those infirmities y to which the best are liable are not to be cherisht and pleaded for, no more than thou would'st plead for the keeping of a little head-ach, of any bodily pain. Thou should'it not by thy good will be guilty so much as of a vain thought, an idle word, or the least motion to any fin; but yet it is not required of thee, to promife ablolutely never more to be guilty of any of these; nor art thou to judge thy felf unfit for the Sacrament, because thou find'it fuch imperfections cleave to thee, forlong as from thy heart thou abhorroft them; and dollardinarily overcome all temptations to more groß and wilful fins. Whilft thou are in the flesh, thy stare is like to be to far imperfect i that it will be thy daily day to grow in grace, and to pray har the forgoveness of the trespalles; to improve Christ, both as a treasury of prate whence thou are to be supplied , and as an advocate with the father, through whom thou may it be pardoned, This I mention, that thou may it not fay, I discourage thee from the Sacrament, by making it an engagement to greater strictness other at's possible for manin this life to come up to since I do affure thee thou may fately come hither, if thou are bue fincerely refolved to do what in thee lies to please God, and hot to run willfully into those actions, which thou know it are contrary to his will. And this alfo may take away that fond opinion of fome ignorant people, that it's best me ver to receive the Sacrament, till they came to their death. bed, as thinking that every fin afterward will damn them; but remember what I have told you, that we do

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not promise never to sin more, but not to allow our selves in sin; and to this sincere endeavour to keep all Gods commands, we are before as strictly tied by our Baptism, and therefore by your reason this should be deferred till we come to die, as some of the Ancients did, partly through this mistake, and thinking this washt away all the fins before committed. And if you should be of this opinion also, that the Sacrament gives you a pardon of all your former fins, and therefore it's good to put it of to your death-bed, confider well, that it's by vertue of Gods promifes that you have any ground to expect pardon of fin; and by those promises, to which the Sacraments are feals, this pardon is affured to all penitent believing ones; so that Baptism and the Lords Supper do feal your pardon, even of fins that may hereafter be committed; if you truly repent of them, and betake your felves to Gods mercy in Christ for forgiveness: But if you think, when you have lived an ungodly life, to make up all by taking the Sacrament when you are lick, know, to your timely conviction, this will not do the work, as you shall know to your terrour, if you depend upon't: for remember what I told you, that if you do not truly repent of fin, it is not the Sacrament that will give you a pardon; and this true repentance few upon a death-bed have, that put it off till then. Moreover, you that are for deferring this duty till you come to die, I might ask you how you know whether you shall not die suddenly, or have the use of your reason taken away by your diffemper, or be visited with the Plague, that no Minister dare come near you? and farther, you feem not to confider, that this Ordinance is exceeding helpful to us, for the overcoming of lufts, and leading our lives as we ought; and this brings me to the fecond thing which I would have you take notice of,

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2. Namely, That if thou art but once come up to a resolution, to do thy best against sin, and to please God. and addresses thy self to the Lords Supper, with an earnest desire of grace to be here given thee from Christ. to enable thee to perform thy promiles, thou mailt very confidently expect strength and assistance from him, and even now to partake thereof. Little do'st thou think what a mighty blow thou mightest give to thy strong lusts, and to the Kingdom of Satan within thee, by fuch a firm resolution as this, made with an humble dependance upon Gods Grace, bound upon, and confirmed by taking the Sacrament. Oh! if thou wast but brought into fo ingenuous and good a frame, as to be truly grieved, that Sin and Satan should have so much interest in thee, and didst heartily desire, that God would cast them forth, and take possession of thee for himself, in how good a way wast thou then to a deliverance? If God faw thee labouring under the burden of thy lusts, tugging with thy backward heart, to bring it to him, thou canst not imagine what help he would foon Wherefore sit not down in a faint dejectiafford thee. on; fay not, there is no hope of ever getting up fuch frong lusts, which are so deep rooted in my nature, and so confirmed by long custom, it's to no purpose to attempt it. Why man, must not this work be done, or thou perish for ever? And the longer it's delaid, the harder it's like to be. Thy case is sad indeed but not disperate yet; Let neither thy presumption, nor despondency make it desperate. The things that are impossible with men, are possible with God. Wherefore rouze thy self, and gather up all thy strength: for be sure, sitting still will bring thy death. Limit not Gods power, but ask thy own heart, whether thou are willing to be cured: for no diseases are too hard for the Physician that will take thee in hand. If thou will but arrend upon him, and humbly beg, and acod,

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cept his help, oh how foon can he bring down all high imaginations, and every thought that rebels against him, and subdue all things to himself. He hath healed and cleanfed as vile finners as thou, and conquered as flubborn hearts as thine. He can fo change thy nature. and the very temper and bent of thy foul, that thou shalt abhor those fins which now thou think'st thou canst not live without, so that thou wilt chuse rather to betorn limb from limb, or to take Toads and Serpents into thy bosome, than to meddle with what was once so pleasant; and wilt wonder that ever thou should'it be such a Beast, such a Devil, as to take delight in that which was fo hurtful to thy felf, and so displeasing to God. Oh let not then the seeming sweetness of any lust bewitch thee any longer, or betray thee into a flothful neglect of thy duty: If fin would have made thee happy, thou hadft found it long fince, and yet what haft thou ever got from it, that comforts thee to look back upon it? Or that would do thee any good, if thou wast to die at this hour? And put it on thy account, nothing better wilt thou get at the last. But little do'st thou think what thou losest one year after another whilft thou remainest estranged from God, and think ft an holy life fuch a tedious difficult thing. Be perswaded then at length to make a tryal, and fee what can be done in the case. Bind thy felf by the most solemn yow to forfake thy wicked waies, and to become Gods faithful servant and come to the Sacrament with this delign; and if thou be fincere, thou mailt be confident of receiving help from God, to keep his Covenant, which, by his Word and Spirit, thou art drawn to make with him. So much for the third objection. an his deal bonnels or coverage

ente el mailied de la sele telque e es est a redW elle. Ente des , cles estes with respect to the english CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Obj. We are not in perfect charity, but at variance with our neighbours, Answered.

4.0bj. THE fourth and last that I shall take notice of, is very common in the mouths of many, to wit, That they are at variance with their neighbours, and therefore cannot with good Conscience come to the Communion, whither none are to come, but they that are in perfect charity with all men; and commonly they alledg, that they have Law-suits, or some kind of quarrellings

one with another.

Anf. In answer hereto, let me ask you, who put this objection, whose fault is it, that you are not at peace with your neighbours? I question not but you'll prefently tell me, that the fault is theirs. But then farther, have you no enmity in your minds against them? But are you willing to be reconciled to them, and to do what on your part may conduce thereto? And though they be crossand perverse, yet do you from your heart forgive them? fo that you would not take revenge on them, if it were in your power, but would do them good if they should need your help? It's very like you'll be ready to reply, that you are thus well-affected toward them, and that the mulice is only on their part: and for the present I shall suppose you speak true; whereupon I demand, whether you can be so weak, as to think that another mans fin, shall be laid to your charge If your neighbour be malicious, is that any fault of yours? Or doth his malice make you any more unfit for the Sacrament, than his drunkenness or covetousness? What a sad case might the best Christian be in, if it was in the power of every wicked man, that owes him

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him a fpite, to make it unlawful for him to go to the Sacrament? as by your arguing it would be. Suppose any malicious man should without reason pick a quarrel with me, and after I had used all means to pacifie him. he should utterly refuse to be at peace, what's to be done in this case? Must I stay away from the Sacrament till I can perswade him to be friends with me? perhaps that may never be, and must I be bound to a thing impossible? or be so great a loser through another Mans wickedness, which I cannot help? Is it not enough for me to be reconcil'd to him in my own mind, and freely to forgive him what injuries he hath done me? how elfe would those blessed Saints in the Primitive times have done, whilst they were maligned and persecuted by almost all Men? we never find that they made this any pretence to keep away from the Lords Table, at which they did so frequently attend. They thought themselves guiltless (as well they might) whilst they prayed for their Persecutors, blest them that curst them, not avenging themselves, but giving place unto wrath, and not giving to any man just cause of offence. And do you but labour thus to behave your felves, and then never trouble your minds with other mens enmity against you. Yea, do but thus, and you will fully anfwer the command God hath given us, to live in peace and quietness, Rom 12. 18. If it be possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceable with all men. Which words plainly infinuate, that it is not alwaies possible to have the good will of all Men, but yet we must labour for this, and do nothing that may hinder it, and therefore above all must not bear or discover ill will to them.

But here perhaps some will reply, that they are forc't to vindicate their wrongs, and to go to Law with those that would abuse them, or that sue them without cause, and therefore can they with a safe conscience receive

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the Sacrament before the contention is ended? why, to this you must even ask your own hearts for an answer. For (as I faid before) if you this while have no malicious delign against them, but seek only to defend or right your felves in a just and lawful minner, there's nothing that need trouble you in this case. For in the thing it felf; it's not a fin to go to Law, if the cause and design be good, no more than it was for the fews to ap. peal to their Judges, to determine matters betwixt man and man. And therefore when the Apostle condemns the Christians, for going to Law one with another, before the Heathen Judges, which made it utterly a fault, he yet adviseth them to let some in the Church to judge betwixt the brethren, in controversies that might happen touching their worldly concernments, I Cor. 6.45. And there fuits may pollibly be lawful on both fides, as when fuch a difficult cafe shall happen that cannot otherwise be dicided, and then both parties might maintain charity to each other, if they were but fuch as they ought. But if without cause you are vext by men of contention, beware of acting out of wrath, fpleen or revenge, yea, or of doing any thing out of meer felfiller ness: for even in your temporal concerns, about your estate, credit, &c. Gods interest should be more aimed at than your own; and you should not so much endeavour to fecure or recover these for your own lake, as that you may hereby be more capable of honouring God: and if you faw that, through some circumstances it might tend more to Gods honour, to neglect a vindication of your right than to profecute it, in such a case it would be your duty to fit still. (They that have de voted themselves, and all they have to God. will understand this and none else.) Hence you find the Apostle expostulating with the Christians, why they would not take wrong, and even suffer themselves to be defrauded rather ather than contend, whereby they did then so much disgrace Religion. Verf 7. Of that forequoted Chapter. But yet I say, when it is your duty to mantain your right, against those that would abuse you, you may do this; and yet have no spight against their persons, nor any desire of their hurt, if your own hearts be right; and may really forgive them, whilst you endeavour to avoid the injury which they would offer you. And let this suffice on supposition, that you are thus well-affected towards those, that make themselves your adversaries; which if you indeed be, I hope I need use no more words to perswade you, that other Mens malicious behaviour towards you, need be no hindrance to

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But on the other fide, give me leave to deal plainly with you, all you that infift upon this reason for neglecting your duty, because there's difference betwent you and your Neighbours, I strongly suspect that you your felves are very much in fault: and indeed you confess as much by your practice, whilst in your words you difewn it; for why is it you make this a ground of abstaining from the Sacrament, but that your Confciencestell you, you bare so much ill-will to your neighbours, that it's a dangerous thing for you to receive it? Oh look back upon your ways, and fee whether instead of bearing wrongs, you have not wrong'd and defrauded others. Have you not opprest, or needlesly vext them, through eager deligns of railing your felves by their ruins, not caring whom you have injured and trampled upon, fo you might but get your own ends? Orif you will not own this, yet look faithfully into the temper of your fouls. Do you not stand vilely affected towards somethat have done you injuries, and whom you take for your enemies? Are you not backward to any thorough reconciliation with them? Do you not ftand. 3.13

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fland upon your terms? and expect that they should come first and humble themselves, and stoop to you, before you'll feek after any peace with them? your great foirits forn to be first in this work; nay its well if you are not refolv'd against it, let them do what they will? Oh proud wretches! Is this like Gods dealing with the World? when we had given him the offence, yet who was it began first to treat of a peace? Hath the great God given you this example, and yet are you too good. for footh, to feek to your fellow creatures to be at peace with you? If this be your goodness, may not the Devil himself pass for good? for he hath pride enough, and what's yours better? But farther, do you not cherish a facred spleen against them, which fills you withinplacable defires of being reveng'd on them . and makes you griev'd to fee them do well in the world? where. as you could heartily with their ruine, and would delight to be in a capacity of doing them a mischief, and long to bring them under you, that you might infultever them, and make them repent that ever they difpleased such as you. Oh devilish and monstrous so rit! that ever it should dwell in the breasts of anythin call themselves Christians! Christians are they called? they deserve not the name of Men. Certainly there are many as good Christians as these hang'd at Think for cutting Mens thoats. For did not fear of Man restrain them, you should quickly see their envenous rancour break out into as bad effects. But suppose your malice be not boil'dup to fuch an height, yetil you harbour fo much as makes you unfit for the Sacrament (as according to your own acknowledgement you do . whilftit keeps you from it) it's a plain fign your fouls are yet under miserable distempers fartrombeing truly fanctified; you live fill under the power of felf love, unmortified pride or coveroushes which are

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the secret cause of this your discord with others. And alas! though these present differences were ended. you would be far from a firmels for the Sacrament. whilft you abide in the condition you are in . not having your peace made with God, but being in enmity against him, through a subjection to your reigning lusts. And therefore you might more truly fay you are not he for this duty, because you are proud, and covetous, and envious, than because you are at variance with any one; only you hope for some kind of excuse, by laying the fault on others, but that I have taken off before. And furthermore, is it not a plain discovery, how little love you have to Christ and your own fouls, that you can willingly be so long absent from this Ordinance, upon fuch a filly pretence as this, that your neighbours and you are not agreed. It's a fign of an ill fromach. when people are glad of an excuse to fave them from eating. What could not you, if you had been so mindded, have got an agreement before now? Or at least. could not you have done so much towards it, as might have fatisfied your Confciences, that you were not in fault? Was there but any worldly advantage to be got by doing thus much, you would sooner fer about it, I'll warrant you. But being, I doubt, very indifferent to Sacraments, or to any thing that concerns you fouls avery little reason serves to keep you from them, since you find no want of them, nor can imagine how you should be much bettered by them. And whilst you are in this wretched frame, befure you shall never want one thing or other to hinder you. To bring you to better apprehensions of things, let what I have faid before fuffice : for I now haften to a conclusion; only let me with you to beware of cheating your felves with that mitake, which I endeavoured to remove under the last Objection, to wit, That whilst you come not to the Sacrament

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crament, you may safely persist in such and such actions, or in such a temper of mind, which ought to be changed before you go thither: for thus you seem to think, whilst you stay a way, because there are fallings out betwixt you and others; being it seems resolved to continue in your enmity, and think your selves secure enough, if you come not hither in this evil mind. If these be your thoughts, pray answer me these two

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things.

1. How can you desire of God the forgiveness of your sins whilst you refuse to forgive others? Have you the impudence to do it? Or the ignorance and prefumption, to think fuch defires would be granted? See where the contrary is expresly told you, in that forementioned place, Mat . 6.15. Nay, tell me plainly, How dare you so much as say the Lords Prayer; wherein you beg of God to forgive your trespasses, as you forgive those that trespass against you? What, do you pray that he would remember your iniquities, and charge them upon you, and take vengeance of you? For thus it feems you deal with those that offend you. Or do you think to make your case somewhat the better, by never saying this Prayer, or by leaving out this petition? Can you imagine this will hinder God from dealing with you according to the tenour thereof? Me-thinks you should not be so weak: No, be you fure, God will make good his word, that if you forgive not, you shall not be forgiven, whether you give your consent or not. If you say you do forgive your enemies, then I ask you again, why upon account of any differences you should neglect the Sacrament? But if you do not forgive them, you fee it's as dangerous to fay your Prayers, whilft you are in this mind, as to come to the Communion. of Doy has

2. But again, If through these differences with your neighbours you are unsit for the Sacrament, pray be think

think you well, whether upon the same account you are not as unfit for death? And dare you continue in fuch a desperate condition as this? Do you not believe, that the charity which is required to make you fit for the Communion of imperfect Saints here on earth, is as necessary for your admission into the Communion of Saints in Glory? Are you not fit to go to the Lords Table? and are you then fit to appear before his Tribunal? Take this for an undoubted truth, that if you fo far allow your felf in malice or any other fin. that you are (according to the Gospel rule) unworthy of the Sacrament, if you die in this condition, you will be thought unworthy of everlasting life. Methinks then you should never dare to live in such an estate, wherein you dare not die. You take it to be a dangerous thing to die out of charity with any, and is it fafe think you to live out of charity, or in any other fin, for those that are liable to death every moment? Wherefore, to conclude, my advise to you is, that you would without any longer delay go to your brother, and if you have wrong'd him, acknowledge it, and make all due reparation, and do what in you lies to be reconciled to him : but if he prove obstinate, or have wrong'd you, see that you heartily forgive him and clear your breast of all spight, or defire of revenge; so being careful in all other respects duly to prepare your selves, come to the Lords Table there to receive a confirmation of peace betwint God and your ownSouls. And thus have done with the Reveral objections that are made against this duty. being very dearly held forth by the

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CHAP. XVI.

Directions for a due preparation, and right Receiving.

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In the last place, according to my promise, I come to give some Direction to those who are willing to address themselves to this work; to instruct them for their immediate preparation to, their behaviour in and after the same. And though I have already at large shewn what the design of this ordinance is, that so we might the beter know how to behave our selves thereat, and have thence discovered what kind of persons Communicants ought to be, yet I shall in a few words premise a repetition of the same, that you may the better

apprehend and remember it.

Know then, that it pleased our blessed Lord Jesus, in the evening of that night wherein he was betrayed, to appoint the Sacrament of his Supper, partly for the present comfort of his Apostles (who began to be call down upon the knowledge of his sufferings, and removal from amongst them) but principally for the benefit of them, and all other Christians, in the times that were to follow, even till he should come to judgment, till which time it never ought to be laid down in the Church. The great end of it was (as I have faid) to preferve fresh in the minds of all Christians, the memory of their Lord and Master, and especially of that unvaluable mercy flewn in his dying for them; his Death being very cleerly held forth by the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine. But we must not think, that it was for an idle uneffectual Remembrance of him that he commanded this duty, but for fuch a Remembrance, as might tend to the great advantage of our fouls; even that by remembring our Redmption,

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we might be brought to have low mean thoughts of our selves, who were lost and undone, but recovered by Free grace; that we might keep up a sense of the exceeding great evil of fin, which made us liable to those miseries, whence only his death can deliver us, and so might be stirred up to a greater forrow for, hatred of, and resolutions against sin, the occasion of his Death; and that by the remembrance of his love, we might be the stronglier engaged to him, and here, in a visible and express manner, might solemnize our Covenant with him, and frequently renew our promises of faithfulness. Moreover, here Christ hath made a familiar representation of the blessings he hath obtained for Believers, that hereby we might be quickned to earnest desires after them, and so being at prefent fitted for the communications of grace to our fouls, might receive the same; and might here also receive a confirmation of our faith, that we shall in due time enjoy those priviledges that are invisible, and yet to come. And farther, he hath ordained, that his death should in this lively manner, at fet times be represented to us, that having it fresh in our thoughts, we may be the more powerfully moved at such seasons as these, to celebrate and adore that wisdome and goodness, which hath fo wonderfully appeared in the contrivance and accomplishment of our Redemption; and that fellow-Christians meeting together for this work, may be the more endeared to one another, and quickned to long after a perfect communion in the praises and love of God and their Redeemer, in that future glory whereof they have here a shadow and foretast.

Now as the ends for which this Ordinance was appointed inform us, what kind of persons they that frequent it ought to be, as to their habitual qualifications, so do they also teach us, what ought to be the workings

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of our foul in our aproaches to it; fince here we are to exercise and put forth those graces, which are beforerequired to be wrought in us: but yet for your plainer direction, I shall tell you more particularly how you ought then to behave your selves; and lastly shall shew, how you may improve it afterwards to your greatest

advantage.

But by the way take notice, that I suppose you, to whom I now speak, to be such as are heartily willing to come to the Sacrament in that manner, and to those ends which Christ hath commanded: and therefore! Suppose you to be already so far convinc'd of the evil of fin, that you are resolved to forsake it; and so far convinc't of the greatness of those benefits that come by a Saviour, and of your need of him, that you are firmly purposed to accept of him, as he offers himself to you, that you may be his, and he may be yours for ever. And upon this account, I shall say little to put you upon, or help you in that felf-examination, whereby you may come to the knowledg of your own Estates, whether you have a true work of Grace wrought in your hearts or not, fince I have before faid fo much to this purpose; but shall now rather direct you, how to exercise and express your Repentance, Faith, andother graces. Only as you go along, if you find your felves willing to perform the duties I shall mention, you have reason to believe that your condition is good; but if you refuse these, you have too much ground to suspect, that all is not well with you And though it be usual to to distinguish betwixt dire ctions for an immediate preparation to the Sacrament, and those that are for a right demeanour in the act of Receiving , yet I shall chuse rather to speak of both under the same Head, since it hath been my bullness all along, to bring Souls to a fitness for this work, and and fince in our performance of the duty, our hearts ought to be kept in the same disposition and frame that they were brought into, by our preparations for it.

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1. First then, I would advise you who intend to come to the Lords Table to fet apart some convenient time, for the preparing of your fouls for this weighty work. It is a most serious business, and ought to be seriously taken in hand: Let nothing here be done curforily or rashly. Not that I would have you daunted . as if it was a work of that nature, that you must either come trembling, or else stay away for fear; no, but only fee you be very ferious; for fo you ought to be whenever you have any thing to do with God; even when you so much as mention his name, or open a Bible. or come to hear his Word; and therefore being now in a more especial manner to draw near to him, in a duty wherein a miscarriage is more dangerous, it's very requifite that you make more solemn preparation for it. fince upon this, the right performance of it doth very much depend. And therefore it is, that I would have you fet some time apart for that purpose, which will be most convenient in the Week, or on the day before you Receive: though I would have you be imployed in this work more than once or twice. But if you are Servants, and so are straightned of time; or through poverty are constrained to daily labour, you must watch for the fittest opportunities you can get. And it is no doubt, but you will find time enough, if you will but be watchful to redeem time from idleness, and vain ways of spend-However it's better to spare some time from your working or fleeping, yea, or eating, than to neglect those works, for which you had your life it self: for it's of far more consequence, I hope, to save your fouls for ever, than to keep your bodies alive a little while, though you may very well do both, if you be willing. R 3

2. Having set apart some time, see that you be not only got alone, and your hands taken off your business, but let your hearts be with-drawn from off all wordly things, and set, as in the presence of God, upon an employment of no small consequence; and humbly beg of God, that he would vouchsafe you his presence and affiftance in these your preparations, and in the work you are preparing for; that he would fet and keep your minds in a frame fuitable thereto; and graciously own, accept and bless you, who in obedience to him have fer upon this duty; and beg of him, that he would help you in the fearching of your heart, and reviewing of your life, that you may not only have a fight of fin, but a right sense of its vileness, that you may not only think of it, but grieve for it; and that all your meditations may be attended with suitable affections, and that in all, you may be fincere and upright, that so upon good grounds, you may take comfort in the review of what you shall have done, and by this present opportunity may be advanc d one step forward toward your eternal rest.

3. And when you have done thus, Let your first work be, to enter into such a serious consideration of your own estate, both by nature and practice, as may be most essectual to bring you to a sound repentance. The reason why I advise you to this first, is, because you being now about to celebrate the remembrance of the greatest mercy that ever was manifested to mankind, wherein especially love and thankfulness are to be exercised, it is not possible you should feelingly acknowledge it as so great a mercy, if you be not very sensible of your own misery, & of that absolute need you stand in of it. Should you ofter money to one, who thinks he has no great want of it, he might take it perhaps, but not with that thankfulness that another would, who is ready to starve for lack of relief.

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Aman that perceives himself finking and drowning. with what readiness will he lay hold on an hand that's held out to fave him? Thus, the deeper fense you have of your own vileness, the more will you admire Gods goodness, in having any regard to such a worthless The greater you perceive your fins wretch as you. to be, the more need you will fee of pardoning mercy. the more you will prize, and the closer you will cleave to Christ, and the more readily will you come hither to receive the feal of your pardon. The lower your humiliations are, the higher ordinarily will you rife in praise and joy. Wherefore it will be very needful, especially if this be the first time of thy receiving, or though it should not, yet I say, it will be needful, and profitable for thee to take an impartial view of thy felf, what a vile unworthy finner thou art, that fo thou mailt think meanly of thy felf, as thou oughtest to think, and maift be fincerely humbled in the remembrance of all thy miscarriages. And for thy help herein I shall run over a few particulars. And more particulars.

Consider what a finful nature thou brought'st into the World with thee, being conceived in sin, and shapen in miquity, and being hereby a Child of wrath. Think how ignorant thou art of God, how much at enmity with him naturally; how exceeding prone to all sin, and how averse from goodness, as by experience thou halt sadly found, and didst soon begin to find, so that thou maist well acknowledge, that in thy sless dwells no good thing. And then remember with brokenness of heart, how early thou didst set upon a trade of actual sinning, wherein thou hast been so constant all thy days. And call to mind the several ages of thy life which thou hast past through, and the particular sins of those times: the sensuality and pride, and all the sollies of thy youth; thy mispence of precious time in idleness

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and foolish sports and pastimes. Reflect also upon the fins of thy riper years, if thou art yet come to them, fuch commonly as company-keeping, drunkenels and wantonnels; or on the other hand, coverousnels, overeager following of the World, to the neglect of Gods service, injuring and over-reaching your neighbours, uncharitableness to the poor. Call to mind also the places and relations you have lived in , and the fins you were therein guilty of, as whilst you were at home with your Parents, at School, or in Service, or any other way dispos'd of : think whether you were not guilty of telling lies, of disobedience, slothfulness, and unfaithfulness, which are the usual fins of those times. You will find it very profitable and affecting, to be as particular and punctual as you can in this review, as to think at fuch a place, in fuch company, I was guilty of fuch and fuch fins. And then fetch in matter for your humiliation; by confidering the feveral aggravations of your fins, as your being devoted to God by Baptism. and yet revolting from him, when you came to the ule of your reason; receiving all you had from him, and yet rebelling against him, abusing your mercies to the dishonour of the giver. Moreover your fins are much the more hainous, who have had good education, and been brought up to hear and read the Word of God, and have been plainly told what is your duty, and yet have neglected it; who have had many a time convictions of the finfulness and danger of your courses, and yet have gone on in them, and have had fome purpofes of a reformation, and yet have foon loft them, or it may be under fome pange of Conscience, or in a fit of sickness, you have made promises of amendment, and yet all come to nothing, but after that you went on in a careless course of life. You whom I now suppose to be thorowly converted to God, let it grieve your hearts

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thus to remember the fins of your ungenerate flate, that you should live so long estrang'd from God, and entertain fuch unworthy thoughts of him, and do fo much to provoke him, whom you have fince found fo good and gracious. How can you with dry eyes think of that time, when you were like others, foolish, disobedient, deceived, ferving divers lufts and pleasures? Me-thinks you should be fill'd with a kind of horrour when you do but reflect upon that difmal flate: when you think how near you were to the burning Lake, and yet how fecure; and when you confider what a meer fink of loathsome fins your hearts once were. Oh firs! was not that a fad time, when you could take delight in nothing but in doing your selves mischief? when nothing tasted sweet but draughts of poison? when the very bent of your fouls was contrary to God and godliness? fo that whatever had a tendency hereto was nauseated by you? Prayer was a burden, hearing a burden, holy conference strange and troublesome, and a godly life was accounted the greatest toil and slavery in the World; so that you could go whole daies and weeks without any thought of God, and never feel any hurt in it. Oh can you without shame remember, how you have many a time hearkened to Satan's temptation, whilst the good Spirit of God hath been refisted and griev'd? How did your loving Saviour follow you from time to time, and by his Spirit and Ministers beseech you that you would be reconcil'd to God? and yet you did stubbornly and unkindly put him off, when he had laid open to you what he had done for you, and what advantages he came to bring you, yet you flighted his offers, as if they were inconsiderable things. Are you not amazed at your own daring impudence and prefumption, to make the great God wait on you so long in vain? He who in a moment could have stopt that breath which he gave you, and

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and thrown you into the Hell you deserved, that yet you durst disobey his commands, yea even reject the suit he made to you, to fave your own fouls. But to proceed, you are also to call to mind your miscarriages, since God by the power of his grace brought you home to himself and shew'd you so much of the evil of sin, that you acknowledged your former behaviour to be full as vile as I have been reprefenting it, and did engage your felves to him, to become his obedient people. confider how you have answered this engagement. And though fince that time, your fins may not have been fo gross nor so frequent as before they were, yet they are now of another nature, and capable of a greater aggravations, as being committed against greater light and experienced love, even against that God who hath freely pardoned you and received you into his favour. Think then how unfuitably you have walk't to the profession you have made, and the means you have enjoy'd, how unthankful you have been for mercies, how unfruitful and unserviceable fince you became the servants of God, though heretofore you had done so much against him; think how little you have done as Parents, Masters, and Neighbours to advance his glory, and confider and bewail all other failings, in the duties of your Relations. Oh think what folly it was in you fo much as to venture upon the least fin, who have been convinced that its your own greatest hurt; or to start afide from the holy path, to walk in which you have found to be infinitely most for your own ease and advantage. Let it grieve you to find fuch remnants of fin yet in your felves, any inclination to evil and backwardness to good. With forrow look back upon all your flips and haltings, and partial backflidings, that you have mide no more progress in holiness, nor got more good by the priviledges vouchfaft you. Be humbled in the remembrance of your dulness, hypocrifie, formality in religious duties, being either prone to neglect them, or flubber them over in a cold and drowfie mannner, or else to rest in them. Call to mind also your unfaithfulness to the many promises you have made of better obedience, in your Prayers, or at the Lords Table; and especially review your carriage since the last Sacrament, you who have formerly received it. And having by fuch like confiderations as these affected your hearts with a sense of your iniquities, humbly betake your selves to God; and lay open all before him by a free and full confession: acknowledg what wretched hainous finners you are, and how unworthy of the least favour, and beg of him to work and increase in you that true and kindly forrow for fin, which may fit you for mercy. And cease not by your good will from this confession, till you find your souls even melted within you, in the apprehension of your own vileness; but however cease not, till you find in your hearts a loathing of every fin, and of your felves by reason of it. And if you have but an inward sense of your fores and pollutions, you will not want fuch words to expressit, as will be acceptable to God? only see that you be sincere, and let your heart make your confessions rather than your tongue. Labour to be as sensible of your case, as you would be it now you stood before a King whom you had offended, from whom except you could beg a Pardon, you must presently be put to death, of which pardon there was good hope, if he did but perceive you to be really forry for your fault affectionate and earnest would you be in this case ! and would have words at will to express your self. How paffionately would you acknowledge and bewail the offence you had committed? and with what vehemence profess against ever being guilty of the like ?

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And how importunately would you beg for mercy; when you faw no other way but present death, if your importunity did not prevail? Thus behave your felves towards God, and believe that he stands over you now in your Closet and hearkens to your prayers, and observes whether you be hearty in them or not. But remember all this while it is an inward dislike and abhorrence of fin, wherein the truth of your Repentance confifts, more than in bare confessing it, and speaking against it with the greatest fervour: these are required too, but beware of taking up with these: Beware I fay as ever you hope for mercy, of retaining any fecret liking to fin or the least thoughts of continuing in it still, whilst with a great deal of stir you revile it as fuch an abominable thing. But rather, if you find in your fouls a kind of hankering after some old lust, not yet thorowly mortified, betake your felves to those considerations which may bring you out of love with it, as how little its like to do for you, what an happinessit doth now, and will hereafter deprive you of, what a mifery it leads to, with other the like formerly laid down; and quit not these thoughts, till you find your felves turned against it. For once again let me affine you, then, and never till then, is your Repentance right, when you are not only brought to grieve for fin, but to hate it; when your hearts are not only broken in the remembrance of it, but are broken off from, and thorowly bent against it.

Though this exercise of Repentance seems most properly preparative to the work you are going about, yet in fuch a penitent humble frame would I have you be, even when you are at the Lords Table. If you eat this Bread and mingle the Wine with tears, it will be never the worse for your souls. And must it not needs affect thee to behold Christs body broken, and his

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blood poured out here in a figure, and then to think with thy felf, This was fin, my fin, even my pride and earthliness, and all the wickedness of my heart and life, was part of that load, which he bare on his own body on the Cross, when he cried out, my God, my God, why hast thou for saken me? Might not the Lord call to me, and even shew me the Print of my many grievous fins, in his hands and feet, and the deep stabs they gave him? and yet ungrateful wretch that I am, how little have I valued the his love? how little hath my heart been affected herewith? where had I been, and what had become of me, if he had not thus undertaken for me? Oh what had my fins brought upon me, if he had not interpos'd and kept it off? How mad and fenfless have I been, in venturing upon sin, harbouring and delighting in fin? Sin, which is fo hainous a thing, that without fliedding of blood it must not be remitted; and for which no blood, but that of Christs could obtain a remiffion. How more especially hainous then is my guilt, in undervaluing this blood fo much and fo long as I have done? How base was my heart to give entertainment to fin, after I had heard what it had done against Christ? and to deny entertainment to him, after I had heard how much he had done for me? Was his kindness such as to bleed for my fins, and shall not I weep for them, especially for the unkindness I have shewn to him? As God never shew'd greater love to Man, than in delivering up his Son for our offences, fo henever shew'd greater hatred of sin than by this action; and therefore conformably, as we ought hereby to be brought to the greatest love of God, so to the deepest hatred of sin and humiliation for it. But have formerly more fully thewn how the confideration of Christs death, may bring us to true Repentance, and what I there spoke chiefly of a change of state, may

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may be applied to the particular exercise of Repentance, whereof I shall insist no more on this. Onely let me meet with an Objection, that may perhaps be in the minds of some, namely, That forrow for fin at this time, scarce seems consistent with that hope of mercy that joy and thankfulness, which are chiefly required in the Communicant. Know therefore, that I press no forrow, but what is a preparation to joy, and doth even animate and exalt it, whilst the humble Christian reflects upon his own nothingness and unworthiness, and thence is carried forth to the greater admiration of that mercy that hath so favourably regarded him. And take notice farther that I would have the sense of Divine bounty, chiefly to raise and keep up this humiliation; whilst we think with our felves, Ob what wretched creatures arewe, thus to offend so loving a Father, who not with standing all our provocations, is yet compassionate towards us, and upon our return to him is so readily reconciled. To retain this apprehension of love in the midst of our mournings, will make them most ingenous, and even pleasant to our fouls; and though it will make us fincere and deep in our repentance, yet it will so moderate our spirits, that we shall not forrow as those without hope; and I could wish, that Christians in all their forrowings would observe this rule. that such an ingenuous shame and sorrow as this is confistent with the greatest confidence of mercy, there is not the least doubt, for which (to omit all further proof of a matter so plain) see that very fit Text, Ezek. 16. 62, 63. And I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, That thou maist remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. It is to be confidered moreover, that the promises of joy are principally

cipally made to this frame. The spirit of the humble and contrite, God hath promised to revive; They that mourn shall be comforted. And they who come to the Table of the Lord weeping, are most likely to return

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4. And when you are wrought to this humiliation for and hatred of fin, you would eafily be brought to the next part of your work, which is, steadfastly to resolve by the grace of God, never more to give willing entertainment to the same, but to be entirely devoted to God by Fesus Christ, to love, please, and serve him all your days. I have told you how at the Lords Supper you renew your Covenant, to perform those duties which you were engaged to, by being Baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Renouncing carnal self, you profess to place your happiness in the love of God, and no farther to regard or please your selves, than is consistent with his pleasure; Renouncing the world, your own abilities, righteousness and worthiness, and all ways to happiness, which are set up against Christ, you profess to take him alone for your Redeemer, and to refign up your felves to him, that he may bring you to the fruition of God, and therefore Renouncing the Devil, who would draw you from God and Christ, to gratifie your lusts with earthly things, you profess your resolutions to be led by the Holy Spirit of God, in those wayes that lead to his everlasting Kingdom. You who are truly willing to all this, (for to fuch I speak) I would have you in the most serious manner, to profess the same before God, and especially in the prayers that you make in preparation for the Sacrament. Bind Your felves over to him by the strictest vow, that he shall be your God, and you will be his people. Proless to him, that he shall be the portion of your fouls, that you will have none in heaven but him, and will defire

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fire nothing on earth in comparson of him, that if he will but vouchfafe you his faving love in Jesus Christ. you shall be indifferent to all things here below, as knowing that in his favour alone you are abundantly provided for. Acknowledge his right to govern you, and dispose of you, being your Maker and Preserver, infinitely wise and good; and engage to take him for your Soveraign and Lord, to render a fincere, unlimitedo. bedience to his commands, and quietly to submit to his Profess to him, that you relinquish all dispensations. right to your felves, and give up all into his hands, to do with you what he pleaseth ; consecrating all to his glory, whatever he doth or shall afford you, being refolved, through his affiftance, fo to improve and employ it. Promise to him, that neither your own will, nor the will of any mortal man, shall be obey'd in contradiction to his. And bethink your felves of those fins, whereof you have been more specially guilty, in thought, word, or deed; and of the duties you have omitted: and engage your selves particularly against those fins, and to the performance of those duties. And then remember under what notion you enter into Covenant with God, and what kind of creatures you'are, even poor lost finners, loaded with much guilt, which you could never, by any fatisfaction of your own making, take off from your selves; and also exceeding weak, fo that you cannot by your own frength give that obedience to God which he requires nor vanquish the difficulties which you will meet with; wherefore it is of absolute necessity that you accept of Jesus Christ, as your Deliverer and Strength : for be only who hath the Son, bath the Father also. Profess then before God your unfeigned willingness to close with the Lord JE-SUS, to all those ends for which he offers himself to the world. Acknowledge to him, that you neither expect mercy

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mercy for any merit of your own, nor fet upon duty in your own might, nor look for aceptance of any fervice for its own worth, but that you humbly depend upon Christ the Mediatour for all that you stand in need of: Acknowledge his right to rule over and in you, as having bought you out of flavery with his own most precious blood, to whose mild and gracious Government you will therefore submit your felves. Profess your willinguels and earnest desire, to have your hearts purged and fanctified by his Holy Spirit, and your lives thereby directed according to the precepts of the Gos pel. Thus profess your acceptance of Christ; and submission to the Spirit, that you may be brought into the favour of God, and be enabled to please and glorihe him by your holy conversation: for all tends to this, even to make you holy in heart and life. Therefore are we married to Christ, that we may bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7.4. And the fruits of righteoufness are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God, Phil. 1.1 1. In him we are created unto good works. This is the effect of his death and refurrection, that we might be dead to fin, but alive unto God, Rom. 6. throughout. They are Christ's Disciples that bring forth much fruit to the glory of God the Father, John. 15.8. And therefore is the Spirit of life giyen us through Jesus Christ, that we may be made free from the power of fin and death, that the carnal mind might be taken away, and we made subject to God, and able to please him; yea, that we might rise up to an higher kind of life, more spiritual and heavenly than was ordinarily attainable under the Law, Rom. 8. the former part of that Chapter. This being then the fum of all, to devote your felves to God by Jesus Christ, to live mbis love and fear, and in strict obedience to bis Laws, till you shall be taken to Glory; you that are firmly purposed to do this, and have made promises thereof DELWIXE

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betwixt God and your own fouls, do you eat the Bread and drink the Wine in the Sacrament as a confirmation of these promises. Let this be remembred I beseech you, whatever you forget, That bereby you do most straightly engage your selves to live a Righteous, Sober and Godly life, from this very day, and to the end of your dayes. This some give as the reason, why the Name Sacrament is put upon Baptism and the Lords Supper. because they are of alike nature with that Oath, which Souldiers were wont to take, to be obedient to their General, and rather to dye than to forfake their Colours which Military Oath was called a Sacrament; and thus both by Baptism and the Lord's Supper are we confectated to the Service of God. A very Heathen ancient. ly, when he gave an account of the practice of the Christians, said of them, that they did sometimes in their affemblies, by eating and drinking together, engage one another to abstain from theft, murder, adultery, and all kind of wickedness; so right a notion he had of the defign of this duty. Imagine then you heard Christ faying, All that will bearken unto me, and become fuch as I would have them, both in their hearts and lives, let them come and take the Sacrament in witness of their resolution to cleave to me. And let the voice of your Soul in answer be, Lord, I am willing to hearken to thee, to take thee for my Redeemer and Lord, and it is my unfeigned desire to be boly as thou would'st have me, it is my resolution from this time forward, by the help of thy Spirit, to yield a sincere obedience to all thy commands, and not allow my felf in any known fin, whilft life shall last, and in witness bereof Itake this Sacrament, which thou hast call'd me to. And thus thou do'ft plight thy troth to Jesus Christ, by partaking of these consecrated Elements, as friends are wont to break a piece of Silver betwixt them, to bind each other the faster to the promises they make; or as the lI

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the Man and Woman express their consent to a Marriage, by their use of the Ring. And hereby thou do'ft in effect profess, that thou expectest Salvation by Christ upon no other terms, than as thou shalt be found faithful in making and keeping this Covenant with him. Thou mayst easily perceive this is no trifling matter, and therefore good reason there is, I should advise thee to be serious and deliberate in it, lest by thy hypocrifie thou should'st even bind over thy felf to damnation: for if thy heart will not consent to such a Covenant as I have described, think not I go about to perswade thee to dissemble with God. But yet remember, there is nothing in all this, that may afford any ground of helitation or doubting, whether thou should it do it or not, unless thou art in doubt, whether thou had ft best be sav'd or damn'd: for except thy heart be brought to fuch a subjection to, and closure with Christ. it's impossible thou should'st ever be faved by him. This Wedding-garment of Faith and Obedience, which I would have thee put on, is as necessary for thy being received into Heaven, as for thy being a welcome Guest at this Table. And by the way consider how you have endangered your Souls, you who have from time to time received Sacraments, and never thought of any fuch Engagement as this; which yet the very action it felf layes upon you, nor ever took care to be faithful thereto. In what a daring manner have you laid your selves open to vengeance? And how great is that patience which hath hitherto bore with you? even whilst you have been wilfully guilty of most horrid perjury. I mention not this to drive you to despair, no, there is yet hope of mercy concerning this thing, if now at length you are but sensible of your miscarriage, and will carefully reform it for the future.

Whoever you are, that do now from your very

hearts render up your selves to God by your redeemer, doubt not of a gracious acceptance: you that with such designs do assemble to this Supper, (and none else are sit to come there) of you will Christ say, when he looks upon you, as once of his Disciples who sat about him, Behold my moth er and my brethren, Mar. 3. 34. for as he there adds, ver. 35. who sever shall do the will of God, the same is his Brother, Sister and Mother. Yea, to you will the Lord Almighty say, I will be a Father unto you, and re shall be my Sons and Daughters, 2 Cor. 6.18. and safely may you regard your selves in this comfortable nearness of relation to him, which brings me to the next.

You that are thus truly humbled for fin, and turned from it to God by Jesus Christ, upon good grounds may, and ought to believe, that God will make good all the promifes of his Covenant, which he hath made to fuch as you are. Whereupon you may with an holy boldness beg the same at his hands, and accordingly do it. Humbly befeech him to deal with you according to those Gracious promises, wherein he hath caused you to truft. And for the strengthning of your taith, consder some of the chief of them and plead them with God in prayer, and beg the bleffings contained thereis. Pray earnestly that the Blood of Christ may cleanse you from all unrighteousness, that your iniquities may be remembred no more, but that you may have peace with him, being freely justified by his grace. Beseech him to give you his Holy Spirit, to carry on the work of faith with power, to enable you against temptations of all forts, to fill you with peace and joy, to lead you in the way whereinhe would have you to walk, & to perform that good thing he bath begun in you to the day of fesus. Pray that you may be found in Christ, at that great approaching day, and may stand before him with boldness, and be discharer.

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harged ged from all accusations, and set with the sheep on his right hand, and with that little Flock be received into the Kingdom, which he hath promised to all that love him. And fince you are as yet in the body, which stands in need of outward comforts and supplies, and are in a World where you have relations, friends, and affairs, wherein you are concern'd, you have promifes touching these also; and may therefore confidently beg your Heavenly Father, who knows what you need, to take care of you and yours, and furnish you with what he fees convenient for you; to direct you in all difficulties, and by his providence so to order all your affairs as may tend most to his glory, and your good. Ask these things of God, and what ever you perceive necessary, and doubt not but they shall be given unto you more abundantly than you can ask or think, and look upon them as confirmed to you by the Sacrament. But remember alwayes, that it is for Christ's sake that these mercies are conferr'd upon you, so that you are to acknowledge your selves unworthy of the least of them, and confess it you had your own defert, you should be stript of all comforts, and be laid under the greatest miseries. Prefels therefore all that you hope for, is on the account of Jesus Christ, who hath purchast all things needful for the happiness of his people, after a forfeiture was made of all by the fall of Adam: through him are these good things promised and these promises fulfilled. In the new Covenant founded in his blood, they all accompany his person; and are ascertained to those that cordially receive him, as the Wife by taking a Nobleman to her Husband, is made partaker of his Estate and Honours. So that having Christ to be yours, all that is in Heaven or Earth to do you good is yours also, by vertue of that Covenant which shall never fail: faithful is he that hath promised, and will do it.

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Wherefore this Sacrament which you are about to receive, being a Seal of that Covenant, you are to take it as an affurance and pledg, that all the bleffings of it, fuch things as I directed you to pray for, shall be bestowed upon you, in that time and order which God sees best. Here then you see is work for faith, if you would receive the comfort which this Ordinance holds forth. And more particularly, I shall tell you in two words, what it is for principally, and in what manner you are

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here to exercise faith.

3. Look upon the Sacrament as sealing to you a full and free pardon of all the fins you stand in need of, whether by nature or practice, so that none of them shall be laid to your charge, so as to condemn you at judgment. And for your cleerer proceeding herein, you are to apprehend the Sacrament as joyn'd to the promise of pardon in the Gospel, and so to look upon it as a Seal annext to a Writing, that promifeth mercy to Rebels that submit themselves: And if a King should send his Officers with many fich Writings to a Company of men that were rifen up in Arms against him; and the Officer Thould tell them, Sirs, bere's a gracious meffage sent you from them King, bere are parers under his own band, wherein he afferes a Pardon to such of you that will now come in, and here's also his own Seal put to them for your greater affurance, all which for your security, I'll put into your hand prefertly, if you submit your selves. They who upon this come in, and take these Papers, have a pardon thereby given them, which they may boldly produce, if afterwards they should be accused. Even thus are you to conceive God's Embaffador saying to you: All you that are willing to receive Jefen Christ to rule over you, and save you, he hath promised in his Gospel to f rgive all your sins, and (beside that of Baptism) bath ordain'd the Sacrament of his Supper, as a Seal of this gracious promil.

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mife, his Instrument of pardon; and here Istand by his appointment to give out the same. You now who find your selves willing thus to receive Christ, are to take this Sacrament as an affurance that this promise shall be made good to you; and so look upon it, and with this quiet your Conscience, when it is unjustly clamorous, and silence Satan when he haunts you with temptations to despair: Then say within thy self, here's the Word of God affuring forgiveness to all that take Christ for their Lord and Saviour, which by his Grace I find my felt inclined and enabled to do, and he hath bound this word with his Oath, and to both he hath added his Sacraments as Seals, and shall this three-fold Cord be broken, what should give me satisfaction, if this do not? wherefore, be gone, Satan, shall I not rather believe thou art a Lyar, who tellest me, repent and believe, and do all that I can, my fins are so great they can never be forgiven, than once suspect that the most true God, will ever revoke that which he hath faid and fworn and sealed to? And at the great Judgment Day Christ will own his Hand and Seal, and then solemnly acquit thee, whom he now pardons by his Gospel. Safely then mayst thou triumph with the Apostle, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It's God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It's Christ that died, &c. And this Christ with his whole purchase is made over to thee, Oh believing Soul. Even by this Sacrament is his blood as effectually made thine, to wash off all the Guilt that cleaves to thee, as if thou had'st been bath'd in his warm blood to that purpose, yea much more effectually.

2. The other direction I would give you is, That you take the Sacrament as an earnest of the everlasting Glory, which shall shortly without question be vouchfast to you, who remain stedsast in your Covenant with God.

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Here in like manner you are to look upon the Gospel. as a deed of gift, whereby, through Christ, an Inheritance in the Heavens is settled upon you, to which deed also the Sacrament doth feal. Even as an House is made over by the delivery of a Key, and Land by a Turf, fo there is a kind of conveyance of Heaven it self made to you by the delivery of the Sacramental Bread and Wine into your hands. And when you receive them, imagine you heard God faying to you, Here poor Soul, take this in earnest of that eternal life, which I have prepared for, & will bestow upon thee. And if the heavenly Kingdom be thus affured to you, on condition of your continuance in the Love of God, you need not question but all things needful for your passage thither, are herein comprehended. If you shall have glory given you, then be fure you shall have that Grace which may fit you for, and bring you to it, wherefore I shall speak particularly under the next head. And if you are thus richly provided for as to your Souls, do you think your Bodies shall be neglected? No, never fear it; whatever Thall be found really good for you, shall be vouchfal'd, What shall you have Christ and his Spirit, Grace, and Glory? and do you question whether you shall have food and raiment? Will the Father make his Son Heir of all when he comes to age, and will he not afford him a maintenance till then? Only refer all your concernments to God, to deal with you as he shall think fit, and question not but he'll dispose of all to your contentment, if you be reasonable. The whole World is in the hands of your Father, and it is not for want of power or love, if you have not the greatest share in it; but it is from his wisdom and mercy, which will rather give you the best. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for you, and hath given him to you, bow shall be not withhim freely give you all things? Rom. 8. 32. Would

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Would you have a larger word? Is there any thing you want not contained in this? The like you may see, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. Things present and things to come, all are yours, ye being Christs. And as Godliness thus hath the promises of this life, and that which is to come, so both sorts of promises are here confirmed to you by the Sacrament, which is a Seal of that full Covenant, wherein blessings both of the right hand and of the left, are

given to Believers.

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You may see then, I hope, by this time, that this is no common Bread and Wine which is appointed for fo great purposes. If a twig was given into your hands, whereby some great Estate was conveyed to you, you would valve it fure above a common stick. Wherefore if you would not be lamentably wanting to your felves, and Enemies to your own comforts, I befeech you, all you that love the Lord Jesus, know your own priviledges, and fix these things firmly in your minds; and let not the greatness of them hinder your belief, since they are as fure as great; but fee that you apprehend a reality in all that is done at this holy Table. See Christ himself in the Minister, see also the benefits that come by Christ in the Bread and Wine, and stedfastly believe that these are given you by Christ, as verily as the Elements are given you by the Minister. For pardon, and right to eternallife, are things to be believed, not felt, so that it is by believing that you must receive the comfort of them. Wherefore, beg of God to clear up these things to your apprehensions, to remove doubtings, to strengthen your faith, and to joyn the inward Seal of his Spirit, to the outward administration of his And do you take the boldness, though with the greatest humility, to profess to God, that you take this Sacrament as an earnest of all those mercies which you hope for from his bounty, as hereby you deliver

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liver up your felves, and all that you have and are, to his will and pleasure. And as an Earnest engageth both the Master and Servant, to do according to their agreement, fo is God graciously pleased hereby to engage himself to his Creatures; so that not onely from his Bounty, but from his Justice and Faithfulnes, may you expect whatever he hath promifed to do for you. There being thus, a Sacred Covenant transacted betwixt God and your Souls, fee onely that you be not treacherous, and Heaven and Earth shall sooner fail, than God will depart from one tittle of all that he hath faid. With confidence may you look upon God as your Father. Christ as your Head and Husband, the Holy Spiritas your Comforter and Guide, the Angels as your friends ready at Christ's command to do you Service, the Saints in both worlds as your Brethern; and the full enjoyment of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the joyful communion of Saints and Angels, your affured everlasting portion.

6. Since you in your selves are poor impotent creatures, who without Christ can do nothing, but must be beholden to that Grace, which drew you to this Covenant to hold you init, and to help you to perform your part; and fince there is of this Grace, even now to be given but to the prepared Soul, Let it be your care to get very sensible of your Spiritual wants, and to come bitber earnestly desiring and expecting a supply. Consider well with your felves, what Graces you find weakest and most wanting, what duties you are prone most to fail in, and humbly beg suitable help and affistance. Examine what temptations you are most exposed to, and oftnell overcome by, what corruptions you find yet strongelt in you, and especially what those fins are to which you are inclined most by nature, and custom, or are most in danger of by your Employments or converse in the World,

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World, and represent all this in your Prayers before God, and beg of him more power and strength against them, and now by this Ordinance to convey it to you: Look round about, and confider well the work you have to do, the difficulties you are to grapple with, the feveral relations wherein you stand, and the duties they bring along with them, and now fue out for direction and affistance in all. And for your encouragement, remember what I told you, that God hath engaged himself to all you his Covenant people, to afford you whatever may conduce to your happiness, now fince you stand in present need of the supplies of his Grace, you may confidently expect the fame, He that will bring you to the end, will give you the means. As if a King should call some of his poor Subects, to give them great posfessions in another Country which he had conquered. and should also furnish them with store of money and provisions for the way, even thus bounteously will God deal with you. Oh Believers. He'll put strength into your feet, and revive your fainting Spirits, that you may hold on your way; you that wait upon the Lord, though you have no power and might in your felves, yet shall renew your Strength, and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, , till you come to your journeys end.

By faith in Christ we are ingrafted into him, as a branch into the Vine, and are related as a Member to the Head, so that he is become the root of our life, and from him shall sap and nourishment be communicated to our needy Souls. He is the dispenser and fountain of Grace, and his Ordinances are as Conduit-pipes, and Conveyances of the same. And of this nature is the Lord's Supper. Here Believers are made to drink into the Spirit; 1 Cor. 12. 13. Which words have a plain reference to this Sacrament, Baptism being mentioned at the beginning of the verse. Come hither

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then, Oh ye thirsty Souls, and be refresht with the waters of life that shall flow in upon you in abundance. Open your mouths wide, and they shall be filled. Be not straitned in your selves, for the bowels of Christ are not straightned towards you. Bring hither capacious enlarged hearts, & you shall carry away accordingly. The anointing of the Spirit, which is shed abroad upon you, is like the Widdows Oyl, 2 Kings 4. 6. It will not stay running whilst there is room to receive it. Oh why is it then that we are so empty? The fault is not in Christ, we must needs acknowledge: but let us examine whether we have not stuft our hearts with other things, that leave little or no room for Grace to be poured in there, Are we not fill'd with the love of earthly things? Is not our delight most of all in profits and pleasures? And our desires eagerly carried out after them? Do not Creature-comforts fo possess and fill us, that they even thrust forth the Holy Spirit from his habitation? Do we not grieve him by our carnal joys. and cause him to withdraw from us? Oh! for shame let it be no longer thus with us. Alas! how little can these narrow hearts of ours contain of the fulness of God, though they were widened to their utmost present tapacity? And shall we pinch and straighten them yet more, by entertaining every trifle there? This is that room which the King of Heaven would have entire to himself, and shall every common Guest, every Beggat be lodged there? Is it fit that Money-changers, and Merchants should fill the House of God? That it should be a Thorow-fare for every Vessel, every common and unclean thing? Oh let your hearts then be confecrated as Temples for the Holy Ghost, not Dens of such Thieves as rob God of his due, and draw away those defires and affections which he claims as his own. And now let the Gates of those Temples fly open, that the King

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King of Glory may come in. Now in an especial manner let your hearts be emptied of all trash, that they may be fill'd with the good things which are here diffributed. If you were fet to an heap of Gold, and bidden to carry away as much as you could grasp, you would keep no dirt nor stones in your hand, that would make them hold so much the less. Loosen your selves then from the inordinate love or thought of any created Good, your Houses or Lands, your pleasures or employments; withdraw your minds as much as possible from all temporal concernments, with which whilst you are taken up, the edge of your defire after Heavenly things is extreamely abated. And if you come not hither with great expectations which are like to be little the better. If you have no higher defigns, but with a little feeming Devotion to eat Bread, and drink Wine, then Bread and Wine are the the best things that you are like to meet with: For is it probable you should find that which you never look after? But if thou comest hither with an holy greedinessafter greater measures of Grace, thirsting for the living God, as the Hart pants after the water-brooks, and as the parched ground gapes for the refreshing showers, then fear it not, thy defires shall be gratified. Thou canst not please God better, than by looking for the greatest & best things from him, which bring most glory to himself, and do most good to thy Soul. Beg earnestly then that by the power of his Spirit accompanying this Ordinance, thou maift partake yet more of a new and Divine nature; that thou maift find strength and vigour diffused through the whole man, and maist now receive fome communications of that light and life, which Christ came into the World that his people might have, and that they might have it more abundantly; now pray that his Death and Refurrection may have their power and efficacy upon thee, that vertue may iffue forth from him

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for thy healing. Beg, that by this food thy lufts may be poisoned and destroy'd, and every Grace strengthned and increased. And be particular in thy defires. (Oh that something may be done this day against my pride and passion, my wordliness, and sensuality, my distruftful fears and discontents.) Oh that I may be delivered from that liftlefness, dulness, and distraction. wherewith I am haunted in holy duties. Oh that I may find my heart hereby drawn nearer to God, and carried out with more unweariedness and cheerfulness in his fervice? that I may be better enabled for a conscientious discharge of my duty, in every place and relation that I do stand in, and in the whole course of my life. Bleffed God, thou who knowest the state of my Soul. give into me, I beseech thee, what thou seest I need most. I have an hard heart, Lord soften it; a dead heart, Lord enlivenit; Iam much in the dark, Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenace upon me. Make me more humble, holy, and heavenly; Oh take this feafon for coming in upon my Soul, and bestowing more of thy felf upon me, that I may become more like to thee. These, O God, are the mercies thou hast promised to thy people, and bidden them to ask; these thou art wont to convey by thine Ordinances; for these things therefore do I wait upon thee this day, with no lower aims do I come to thy Table; with fuch precious things is the Lord Jesus wont to feast his Guests, and of his infinite fulness it is, that I hope to participate; through him it is I hope to be strengthned with might in my inner man, even to be made strong by the Grace that is in Christ Jesus. Oh, will the Head let a member perish? Shall a branch wither for want of succour and juice? Blefled Saviour, thou who wast so willing to shed thy blood for us, art thou not as willing to beflow the fruits of it upon us? Art thou not still as merciful

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ciful and tender as ever thou wast? Thou who didft once so readily heal diseases, and cure all that come to thee, hast thou not as much mercy to Souls as to bodies? Lord, I believe thou art as able and ready to help as ever? If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, and it is my hope that thou wilt. Outward means without thee cannot do it, yet here thou hast bid us attend, and thus Ido, waiting for the descent of thy Holy Spirit. Oh grant the requests of thy poor creature; Say to me, Be it unto thee even as thou wilt; yea, even as thou wilt, oh Lord, let it be unto e, who art ever readily and strongly inclined to do thy people good. Thus stir up your selves, and actuate Faith in such holy breathings as these, and be affured, such additions of grace as you are fitted for, and God in his infinite Wisdom feems meet at present to deal out, shall be conferr'd upon you; and being refresht and strengthned with this banquet, you may cheerfully walk on your way to glory.

7. From all that hath been faid of the greatness of the mercies here commemorated, bestow'd and sealed to, it will appear most reasonable and just, that the hearts of all Gods faithful servants should bere be raised to the greatest beight of divine love, thanksnlness, and joy. I put these together, because, though in the notion they are different, yet in the workings of the Soul they usually go together. That same goodness which works love and thankfulness, causeth joy too, as it's begun to be enjoyed, or strongly hop'd for. And this is a frame most proper to a Communicant, all his preparations being much in order to it: Therefore should he get sensible of his misery, and humbled for his fin, that he may have the more affectionate thankful sense of the mercy that pitied and pardoned him. Wherefore labour much with your felves, even before-hand, to rife up to this ingenuous and pleafant temper, which will

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prove so acceptable both to God and your selves Dwell intently upon that amazing mercy, which God hath revealed to mankind in Jesus Christ, which thing the Angels them selves defire to look into: Ponder well the feveral heightning circumstances thereof; the mean ness, finfulness, and misery of man, the Majesty of God, the dignity of Christ, the greatness of his condescension and sufferings, the fulness and freeness of his purchase and offers. Study all his dealings with your felves in particular, whereby he harh accomplisht in you the deligns of his love, and continue these musings, till you feel a fire of love and joy kindled within you. Let not Satan fo far have his will of you, as to cast you into these dejections, and groundless perplexities, which will rob God of his praise and you of your comfort. Let him not be able to perswade you that God is cruel and unmerciful, and hardly reconciled to returning finners: Have you not the strongest, and most unanswerable demonstration at hand, to confute him? Would you defire, or can you have a greater evidence of the graciousness of his nature, than that very mercy Which you are going to remember? even his giving his only Son to die for us, whilft we were yet ungodly & enemies. And did he of his own free grace, without our asking & against our deserving, provide a Saviour for us, and is he yet unwilling to fave us? did he find out a means for our reconciliation to himself, and is he now backward to be reconciled? Does he now importune us to take, that which he is unwilling to give us? Be not, I befeech you, of fuch an easie belief of the Devil's gross fallacies, and so hardly drawn to believe what God harh not onely faid, but done, so much to make it past all doubtings. See the Apostle arguing much after the same manner, Rom. 5.6, 7, 8,9, 10. Oh let your hearts then be fill'd with admiration of that love, which God hath herein exprest

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exprest to men, the wondrous greatness whereof is fuch, that it almost surpasseth our Faith, and doth far furpass our full comprehension. That there should be away for the recovery of felf-destroying finners, conmived by him whom they had offended, and brought about by the death of his own Son, that they might be raised to the highest happiness, even an eternity of the most ravishing joys, in nearest communion with the Divine Majesty, and all this to be had for a cordial thankful acceptance: This is the Lords doing, and well may it be marvellous in our eyes; Great things hath the Lord done for us , whereof let our fouls be glad. If an hoft of Angels came from heaven to proclaim these good tidings of great joy to all people, shall not the Congregations of Christians eccho back their Glory be to God in the bigbest, who hath sent on earth peace, and shewn such good will to men? Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. Let the Redeemed of the Lord fay fo, whom he hath redeemed from the band of the enemy. Oh do you praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men; who hath shewn mercy to such as fit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and bath broken the gates of brass & cut the barrs of iron in sunder, and bath fent his word and healed you, and delivered you from destruction. Ob do you secrifice the sacrifices of thanks giving, and declare his works with rejoycing, Pfal. 107. Call upon your fouls with, the Pfalmist in another place, Bless the Lord, ob my foul, and all that is within me bless his holy name: Bless the Lord, oh my foul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgivet h thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeems thy life from destruction, and who crowns thee with loving kindness and tender mercies, Pfal. 103. at the begining. Oh think what a deplorable condition we had been in, if God had left us in the hands of Satan, to whom we had enflaved

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enflaved our felves, and had never lookt after us more Oh what a dungeon had this world then been! where we should have lived in darkness and tetters, in horrours and torments, and all as but an inlet and paffage to miseries infinitely worse, and altogether unavoidable But Oh bleffed, and for ever praised be his Name, who hath visited the earth with his goodness, and caused the rejoycing light to thine in dark and disconsolate places, and hath proclaimed liberty to the captive, and thewn a strong hold, to which he hath called the Prifeners of hope to turn themselves, having laid help onone that is mighty, sending forth the prisoners out of the pit by the blood of the Covenant, Zach. 9.11. This is that blood which by the Wine in the Sacrament is represented to you, yea, which is thereby put into your hands, and given you to drink, in rememberance of that which was once shed for you. And shall not the hearts-blood of your dearest Lord warm and revive your fouls, enflame and advance your love? Will you not now begin that new fong of the heavenly Chore, afcribing bleffing, benour, glory and power to him that fits upon the throne, onto the Lamb for ever and ever, who by his blood redeemed us, and makes us kings and priests unto God, Rev. 5. This is that blood to which you owe all that you have or hope for; This quencht those flames, which else had fedupon you for ever; This fatisfied that justice, which elfe had laid hold on you for your disobedience; This purchaft an inheritance, which filver and gold could not buy; This purgeth the conscience from dead works, and makes the foul fruitful unto God; This pacifies the Conscience, and appealeth the disturbances that sense of guilt is apt to raile; By this blood of the Lamb, itis, that the Saints in all their conflicts do overcome. And can you with-hold the most affectionate hearty thankfulness tor this precious all-healing blood? Methinks we **should** boyding

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should even be pained in our selves, as not knowing how to give vent enough to our affections, especially when our bleeding Lord is let before us. Oh let him wholly poffess your thoughts, and do you view that transcendent love which he manifested in his whole course, but chiefly in the close of it, that all may beget in you some answerable returns of love. Read, as you have beiture, those heavenly discourses which were his Farewell Sermons to his Disciples, and his last Prayer for them, which you may find in the 14,15,16,17. Chapters of folm, and fee there how love breathes in every line. Follow him to the Garden, and there hears kento his groans, and behold his bloody fiveat, which proclaims him to be fick of love, of a love that would not bequencht by those crimson streams. No still he goes on! and go thou after him with the Woman that followed him to his Cros; and weep not, if thou canst forbear, whilf there thou feeft him die for love; even for love of thee, poor forly who do'ft fincerely love him. Are thou not aftonish tat the thoughts of it? What could the Lord Jefus fee in fuch miferable worms as we, that hould incline him to undergo all this on our behalf? Nay, there's the wonder, he faw nothing, and therefore be underwent it. Nothing, did kfay? yes, he faw our guilt and defilement to forwhich he might have justly leatherbus: But he feeing all this our misery, was rather moved to a compassion for us; Such a compassion as never dwelt in a mortals breaft, that he should bity those who pitied bnot themselves and dye to recover those who had even murdered themselves; year that he hould die to make them happy, whose fins were the will of his Death, and even merit mercy for fuch as had no mercy on him; and give life to them who took hitaways. All this was voluntarily done by the Son of God o swho begame Man, on purpofe that he might die tads

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and do all this for the fons of men. Let Plays and Fichons be hist off the stage, let Romantick follies be shamed into obscurity: for here is that which alone deferves the name of Love; here's fuch Truth, as commands our belief; fuch worth and weight as calls for our regard, and such stupendious greatness, as may raise our wonder. Here behold the power of love in the fairest display of it, that ever was made to the world, fince its foundations were first laid, beyond which imagination it felf cannot ascend, nay, which falls vastly short of it; how vastly short then doth expression fall? but yet oh that we could feel as much as that little which we speak! Was it ever before known that the thepherd should lay down his life for his Theep? not for innocent Theep, but to reduce wilful Araglers to his Fold; That he who was Lord of all, should die for his Subjects? not for obedient Subjects, but for Rebells appointed to the flaughter. Thus continue thy meditations, till they have fo good an effect up. on thee, that if Christ should appear to thee at this inflant, as thou art got alone, and should call thee by Name, as once he did Peter, and ask thee, Soul, Lovel thou me? thou mightest be able truly to return this aniwer, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. And thento affect thee yet more, confider of Gods faving love in Christ particularly revealed to thy foul, that he was pleased to fay to thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live; Calling thee out of darkness into his marvellous light, laying hold on thee by his Spirit, and recovering thee to himself, when thou wast running far away from him; and many a time preventing and restoring thee by his grace, when otherwise thou hadst utterly ruin'd thy felt. Oh praise him that he left thee not in Satan's kingdom, under the power of thy lufts, but with strong hand and out-streehed arm brought thee out of

that house of bondage, and magnifie his name when thou beholdest that blood wherein thy fins were drowned, as the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Oh bless his name that he did not suffer thee to remain dead in trefpasses and sins, yea, that he did not strike thee dead in them, and fentence thee to the second death, after which there is life no more. This is a fit season for recollecting all the special mercies of thy life, which God hath shewn either to foul or body, to thy self or thine, all which thou art to look upon as vouchfaft through Christ, which makes the mercy infinitely greater. stabilit medi may ton bluest

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And when you have thus endeavoured to get your hearts brim-tul with love and joy, come and let them risehigher, and boil over at the Table of the Lord. Let no fadness appear in your looks, nor a tormenting thought by your good will, feize upon your hearts this day. Come loathing fin as much as you are able, but come loving Christ as much; Have as low thoughts of thy felf as thou wilt; and be as humble as thou canft in remembrance of all thy vileness, but yet let thy Soul magnifie the Lord, and thy Spirit rejoyce in God thy Saviour. Thy Gracious Lord will not upbraid thee with any former unkindness and neglect of his love, which thou art heartily asham'd of and forry for. Wherefore though thou maift come blushing and weeping, yet come not into his presence daunted and despairing. He died on purpose to ease your sous of those fears, which make you all your life time subject unto bondage. Will not you receive comfort, for whom he hath shed his blood that it might be your Cordial? Let him see you then improve it this day to that purpose: for your health and pleasure, if it be solid, is his delight. And if he would have your joy at any time in this World full, now it is; If you must ever more rejoyce, this I am sure,

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's a fit feafon. This is our most folemn Thanks-giving Feaft. Oh wonderful! That the commemoration of the Musters death should be the Serwants Feath. It's his pleasure to have it so, and let us thankfully comply therewith. Instead of his Vinegar and Gall, he gives us Bread and Wine, and better things than they, Here he hath made according to his promise, Ha. 25. 6. A feast of fat things , a feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of Marrow Wines on the Lees, well refined And you may be fure the Master of this Feast, who en tertains his quelts with an affection as great as their fare is costly, would not have them fit there fad and dejected, as if they liked not their provisions or thought themselves not welcome. Would it please you to see your friends in such a posture at your Table? Oh ques flion not your welcome, all ye lovers of Christo but when you are there affembled, imagine that you heard him fay to you, Eat obfriends, drink, yea drinkabundantly ob beloved. Here he hath brought you into his Banquetting-House, and his Bannerover you shall be love. Here will he comfort you with Heavenly Momo; and flay with Flaggons all you that are lick of love. You Children of Abnabam, that comediom the flaught ter of your lufts, here doth your Lord meet yours bis type (Melchifedeck) onet your Father, Gen. 14 18 Setting before you she Bread and Wine for your rest freshment. And here will be bleft you ; He shall dause: you to fit under his shadow, and his fruit shall be sweet to your falt. Here may you expect the most comfore rable communion with Christ, that is to be had in this lower World Here then believing in wolowing himmbon! you have not feen, but whom you may here fee represe fented, do you rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and fall of he would have your joy at any time in

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work, and so more apt to be fill'd with joy, and to break out in praise, let me earnestly desire you bere to bave an eye to a glorified, as well as a Crucified Christ, to remembet notionly his humiliation, but his exaltation. It was the mind of Christ, that his Resurrection, rather than his birth or death, should confecrate a weekly thanksgiving to be observed by the Church in all ages. which should be call'd the Lords own day, and be spent in his praise and service. This being the accomplishment of his labours, his final victory over death, and the grave and all enemies that did affault his own perfon, the memorial whereof must therefore needs be most rejoycing to his servants: And as his Resurection cannot be remembred without his birth and death, which must of necessity precede it, no more can his death be here rightly remembred, without we also bear in mind his Refurection and Ascension to Glory. Can weremember what he was, and not think what he is? Sad meetings had we made indeed if our Lord had been held under the power of death, if fuch a thing may be imagined: All the World then might well bein the disconsolate posture of the two Disciples, that were travailing to Emaus, crying out, We trusted this had been Herebo (hould have redeemed Ifrael, Luk . 24.21. Then would our faith be vain, we should be yet in our fins. But we may now comfort our felves, and use the Apostles gradation, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It's Christ that died , year ather that's rifen again, and is even at the right hand of God. And now with joy let this Refurection and Glory be remembred, as being the fore-runner of yours. When in your thoughts you have descended as low as his Grave, and there stand weeping to think how your fins have flain him, imagine you heard some Angel bespeaking you, in almost the same language that he did the Women at his Se-T4 pulchre. 7317

pulchre, Mar. 16.6, 7. Fear not ye, for I know that you feek fesus who was crucified; he is not here: for heis rifen as be faid, and is gone before you, not into Galilee, but into Heaven, there shall you fee him. When therefore you shall in this Ordinance see Christ crucified before you, think with your selves, This is the Lamb that was dead, but is alive, and lives for ever. By the celebrating of this Sacrament, you are to flew forth the Lord's death till he come. Remember then he is to come, for this fecond coming would Christ have you keep much in your thoughts as well as his first. He left not this pledge of his love with his Church, as a dying Man leaves some gift with his friends to put them in mind of him whom they shall never see more; but as one who goes a long journey, leaves his Picture with his wife, that the may be mindful of him in his absence, and be quickned to long after his return. And good reason have you to be mindful of the Glory of our Lord, fince you your felves will be sharers herein, and so at once you remember both. Here I told you, you take an earnest of the everlasting treasures, and the consideration thereof is exceeding necessary, to raise your value of that which will otherwise appear but worthless and mean. And conceive of your felves as in a journey to that Kingdom, having here taken in by the way to rehelh your felves, as travellers are wont to turn in and bair. And like the Propher, 1 King. 19.8. In the stren th of this meal you are to go on toward the Mount of God. These are provisions sent by your foseph, to serve you by the way, till you come home to himself. Yet a few more Sacraments, and you shall be past the need of all. Here are some fragrancies and drops of sweetness for the refreshment of Pilgrims, till the day breaks, and the hadows flee away, when we shall get up after our Lord to the Mountains of Myrrhe, and the Hill of Frankincense. Here

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Here a Table is spread for us in the Wilderness, and fome Clusters of Grapes prest into our Cup, 'till we shall come to Canaan, and enjoy the Vintage. Behold in this transaction at the Lord's Table, an Emblem and shadow of the future glory, and let your thoughts take advantage from what is here presented to ascend to the joyful contemplation thereof; yet within a while, and you who are his welcome Guests, shall sit down with your Master at his Table in his Kingdom, and there shall taste of the fruit of the Vine new with him: and shall eat of a Manna that is yet hidden to you, and shall exchange your prefent company for the fociety of innumerable Angels and perfect Saints. And let this something quiet your minds, though not take off the quicknels of your defires, all you holy Souls, who are acted by so noble and strong a passion, that you are impatient of that distance, at which you yet find your selves from him whom you love, and are even weary of the World. where you cannot fully enjoy him, much more of your own hearts, that are so estranged from him; comfort your selves, for within a very short while your eyes shall behold him, and you shall be fully satisfied in your most intimate access to and abode with him. You may look back with joy on the redemption Christ hath wrought for you, and may look before you, and lift up your heads with joy, as knowing the day of full and final Redemption draws nigh. Only fee that you now thirst ardently after that spiritual communion with him which is here attainable, in being possest by him, and closely united to him, that being joyn'd to the Lord, you may become one Spirit: This is the bleffed, and onely possible transubstantiation, to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, which is of infinitely more advantage to the believing Soul, than if, according to that monstrous Popilh fiction, he should chew the very gross flesh, and **fwallow**

swallow the raw blood of Christ? For by this means his body would be changed into ours, but by the change I speak of, our spirits become like to his. And if now you hold but this Fellowship with Christ in the Spirit, shortly you shall have a Real Presence, even to the satisfaction of Sense it self: Then shall you see him as be is: for you shall be made like to bim in that day of his Ap-Then indeed shall Sacraments vanish as useless shadows, you having got the Substance, Christ himself. You need then no more behold him in a Glass, but shall see him face to face, and be perfectly changed into his Image. Oh the difference that will be betwixt that clear fight and this dark, alas through our own fault, too dark remembrance! Oh that's the comfort! we shall then have laid by all that stupidity and dulness, which here attends us whatever we are about. That full view of our bleffed Lord will for ever cure us of all coldness and unbelief, and ravish us into one eternal affectionate admiration of Divine Love, If that joy which arose from Faith and Love, whilst he was not seen, was unspeakable and full of glory, how inconceivable, how transcendently glorious must that which shall arise from his immediate sight? If it be fuch a precious priviledge to have a right to Heaven here folemnly given us, what will it be to enter upon actual possession? Oh then, Christians, whilst you are remembring Christ at his Table, let it rejoyce your hearts to consider, that he is remembring you at his Father sright hand, and thither will shortly exalt you. All you whom the King of Glory now espouseth to himself as it were by Proxy as Princes take Wives by their Ambassadors, remember that the day is hastning, when your Marriage shall be more publickly and triumphantly folemnized: when all you bleffed ones shall be call'd to the great Marriage-Supper of the Lamb,

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Net a very little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry: And do you now get your souls mounted as high as you can climb, by all the means that are afforded you, and stand ever wishly looking, and dilingently preparing for his appearance; and never stack your watch, nor let your expectations cool, till either you see him coming in the Clouds, or your selves shall be taken up beyond them.

With some such Meditations as these, which I have fuggested to you under each Head, let your thoughts be taken up whilst you are imployed in this duty, as you shall find your selves most inclined, and as God's Spirit shall direct you; for you need not confine your felf as to the method and form; but rather let your affections have their free course. Onely see that you watch narrowly over your hearts through the whole work, that deadness and distractions may not possess you. Keep up a strong sense of God's presence with you, and often lift up your hearts to him for life and quickning. And let all the Powers of your Souls be formmoned up and engaged in this action, with all postfible vigouriand closenes. Let your minds be kept clear from fadning, and from impertinent thoughts, that you may attend upon the Lord without diffraction, and be more capable of those sweet foretasts of his goodness. which may be as a certain pledgrof your everlasting enjoyment of all that he hath in store for his people, www

Lastly, let me in a word or two direct you to be careful in the exercise of brotherly love. I need not stand, lihope, to repeat the advice I gave you, to get all breaches made up betwixt your selves and brethren; to do all that in you lies to obtain peace; and if that cannot be had, yet to forgive all injuries that have been done you, and to cleanly your minds from rancour and malice, and all desire of revenge; to this let the love of Christ constrain you.

And

And moreover, let your hearts be let out with a fincere and strong affection, towards all your Fellow. members of that body, whereof Christ is the Head. A pleasant fight it will be to your Master who is in Heaven, to look down upon you his Disciples, and see you here feafting together in mutual love and delight, in the remembrance of all that love which he hath shewn to you, and in the joyful expectation of what farther he hath promised. And whilst your love is stirred up to Christ himself, it cannot chuse but be imparted to his friends that are in fight; fuch who fincerely love him, on whom he hath fet his heart, and hath shed on them his Spirit, whereby they are made like to him, and therefore must needs be lovely in your eyes to whom Christ is precious; as being also by this same Spirit made like to your selves, and when in your joyning with them in this Sacred action, you remember that these shall be your everlasting companions in the joy of your Lord, and shall there joyn with you in founding forth his praises; this will farther engage you to them, as being heirs together of the grace of God, and will work in you the beginnings of that love which will hereafter be perfect and perpetual. Whilst your love is built upon such right and catholick principles as these, being placed upon a Christian as a Christian, you hold a communion in the Spirit with all true Christians throughout the world; though your affections will be most fensibly enlarged to those that you know, and with whom you hold a local communion in the worship of God. And your joynt assembling at this Table is a badge of your mutual love, and an engagement to the firm continuance of it. Here are You made to drink in o one Spirit, by which you were Baptized into one Body, according to that Text I named, 1 Cor. 12.13. This Sacrament is, if I may fo call it, an Holy Philire whe chy Believe is are un ted in more fervent 1 700

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vent love to their common Head, and to one another. The blood of Christ is the onely Cement and Soder of Souls. And this is that Christian love which they are taught of God, to which they are inclined by their new nature, and which will eafily be brought into exercise, where the Grace is first wrought in the heart; wherefore it's needless to stay longer hereon, having also spoke somewhat largely to it before. Onely one thing let me suggest, before I conclude this, namely, that you take care to give a practical demonsteration of this love, by contributing according to your abilities to the necessities of the poor members of Christ. This is a facrifice wherewith God is well pleased; a work never out of season, but now most seasonable; being an evidence not onely of your compassion to the poor, but of the stedfastness of your belief in Christ and his Promises, and of your thankfulness for his bounty; therefore you find both these mentioned together, Heb. 13:15,16. As we must offer thanks, so we must not forget to do good and communicate. To quicken you to this charity, both now and any other time, when fit objects are presented, let me onely defire you to imagine to your felves, that the Lord Jesus, who was willing to part with his blood for you, and thinks not an infinite glory too great to give you, upon most easie terms; that even he comes to you in one of his necessitious members, to see what you can find in your hearts to bellow upon him; if you that have Estates think he deserves nothing, let him have nothing; if he deserve but a little, give him but a little; if your lusts have more right to your riches than he, then let your lusts have them rather then he. Let Christ in his members flarve, whilst pride and luxury are maintained, if you think this be just. If you can improve your Estates better fome other way, take what you think the most gainful courfe. For remember, Christ himself needs not

not any thing you have or can do, only he'll try the kindness of your hearts. His is the Earth, and the fulness thereof, and even his poor Servants can he sufficiently provide for without you. Wherefore if, you give not willingly and cheerfully, you may keep your money to your self, for any good that an extorted charity is like to do you. But remember also, you will be sure to lose and leave all that, which God hath not, one way or other, but by giving it to him you fend it before you; and when all things here below fail, you shall enjoy it with infinite advantage in the everlasting Habitations. And let this suffice by way of Direction for your preparation to, and carriage in receiving. A few words for your behaviour afterwards, and I shall come to a conclusion.

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of your belief in Christ and his Promities.

any other time, when he objects are presented.

I when he objects are presented with the sold base free or of the sold ba God for the liberty and opportunity of a Sacrament, which he hath afforded you , and for all the priviledges that are thereby conferred upon your And let your Souls chew the Cud, and retain the Savour of those pleasantthings you have been entertained with; keep them fill lifted up, and exceedingly gladded, in the fense of that love which you brave this day been celebrating and tafting in the belief of that parden which you have received, in the hope of that Grace and Glory which have been affured to you. Medications of Heaven, and the exercise of thankfulness atenower-Try proper works. Confider alfowhat you have dond, what an abligation you have laid upon your self how you don

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you are no longer your own man, having made a refignation of your felf to God by Jefus Chrift: And beg the affiftance of his holy Spirit, to enable you to ftedfastness and perseverance in this holy Covenant whilst life shall last; and befeech him, that the Ordinance you have been made partaker of, may become effectual to your Souls to all those ends that it was defigned for, and which are attainable by it. Think it not enough to read over thefe things, I intreat thee, but do accordingly. and now betakethy felf to Consideration and Prayer to those ends I bavie exprest. Review moreover, what your mifcarriages have been, and hambly beg of God to forgive either want of due preparation, or coldness and diffractions; that your hearts have not been affected futably to the importance and excellency of the duty, and the Majesty of him with whom you have herein had to do. And be heartily thankful for any measure of life and affection, any raisedness and comfort that God bath been pleased to youchsafe you. And here by the way let me caution all humble Christians to beware of a mistake to which they are too prone : to wit, to judge of their profiting in this and other duties by their present feeling, and fo to think they get no good, except their Souls are as it were lift up and ravisht with lensible joys; and these only they take for evidences of God's acceptance, and the having of communion with him. But by this means you will often plunge your felves into needless forrows, and load your selves with unjust censures; and which is worse, you will hereby become less thankful to God, as thinking you have received little advantage, because you found not those delights you expected; and will be in danger of becoming weary of the work, and ready to throw it off, as thinking it unprofitable. Wherefore to avoid these ill consequences, and the mistake that begets them, consider well, That

That it is the uprightness and fincerity of your hearts in the performance of your duty, which mayadminister most ground of comfort to you when you reflect upon it ! for be affured if you have this ornament, you were really acceptable to him that lookt down upon you, though this acceptance might not be testified with the giving in of any extraordinary joy. Let it not then trouble you, as if God was not well pleased with you, because your affections were not raised up to an higher pitch, fince he doth not look fo much at fits of passion, as at the steady bent, and tenour of the Soul. Nor this because you mist of great joys, that you had no favour from, nor communion with God : for confider again , that the truest communion with God, is to enjoy the communications of his grace to your fouls, whereby you are made conformable to bim: & you may enjoy these faving influences of the Spirit, when you cannot feel his more abundant confolations. Moreover, the fruit of this Ordinance is not so much to be difcerned at present, as in your after-conversation. For the great benefit you are to expect, being to receive farther measures of Grace from the Holy Spirit accompanying these means, it cannot be well known what Grace you have received, till you come to the exercise of it, when temptations shall assault you. And, to allude to the Apostle's words in another case, though this Ordinance may not at present be joyous, yet it may afterward yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those that are conversant therein. And lastly, if you are but fincere, as I faid, in your covenanting with God, it is your duty to believe, that you have this day received from him a Seal to the promise of pardon and eternal life, and in this belief may you take much rational and folid comfort, which otherwise you are not like to find: And this is the ordinary way whereby the Spirit conveys comfort to the Soul, first working in you a belief, that

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that the promises of God are in themselves most true, and enlightning you to the knowledg of your own fouls, and then enabling you to apply these promises to your selves as being such to whom they belong. Thus the Apostle tells us, their rejoycing was from the tellimony their Conscience gave of their simplicity and godly sincerity, 2 Cor. 1.12. Wherefore you are not fo much to expect any extraordinary immediate affurance from the Spirit that you are the Lords; but fee to get good grounds for your faith, and so to have your hearts fill'd with peace and joy in believing. Yet doe not misinterpret what I have faid, thence to indulge your felves in any floth or dulness, or to content your selves with the bare doing of the work, without heeding the frame of your heart therein: no, but take as much pains as you can, to raise them to the greatest sensibleness and affection; and if you do so, you may reasonably expect to find much sweetness and fatisfaction in the work it felf: but my meaning in this caution is , that you should not look so much at the feeling of extraordinary comforts, as at the integrity of your hearts in vowing your felves to God, and the continuing stedfastness of your resolutions to be true to these vows.

2. And that's the next thing I would exhort you to, twen to discover this inward truth and sincerity, by your future holy and exact walking; This is that which must crown all the rest. I may say to your as Moses to the Israelites, Deut. 26. 16, 17. You have this day avouched the Lord to be your God to walk in his wayes, and keep his statutes; and the Lord hath avouched you to be his peculiar people, and you have promised to take Christ for your Husband and Lord, to live in love and obedience to him, as you hope to be saved by him. One thing now remains, that you go and do likewise. Say with the Psalmist, I have sworn and will perform it, that I will keep the righteous jud ments, Psal. 119. Pos. Now you have

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been remembring him that suffered in the flesh, armyour solves with this mind, no longer to live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men , but to the will of God, i Pet. 4.1,2,3. Let it not happen to you according to the Proverb, the Dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow that was washt to her wallowing in the mire. If God have spoke peace to your souls; turn not you again to folly. Call to mind particularly what fins you confest and promised to forsake, and do accordingly. You that have been guilty of drunkenness or gluttony, fornication and wantonness, pride or covetoulness, be so no more; you that have been wont to fpend your time in idleness and vanity, in finful company or excessive recreations, spend it so no more; you that have been wont to give way to your exorbitant passions, and suffered them to break forth in unfeemly actions and language, do so no longer. You that are Masters or Servants, Parents or Children, Husbands or Wives, confider well what particular duties your relations call for, and be faithful in the performance of them. You that are Subjects, obey them that are fet over you in the Lord. Towards your neighbours, and all with whom you converse, be just, and honest, loving and courteous, avoiding all backbiting, lying and flandering, all foolish and filthy speaking. Be compassionate and charitable to all that need your help in one fort or another. Be consciencious for the future in the more immediate service of God: be frequent and serious in his worship, both in publick and private, alone and with your families. Beware of iwearing and curling, or of raking the holy name of God or Clifist in vain; make not mention of him in your common discourse without due reverence, and that you are not like to have, if at evesy turn you are crying, Oh God and Oh Lord, as is the eustom of careless people. Profane no more Lords-days, we you may have formerly done, but improve them to - your

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your fouls good. What ever talent you have, of wealth, wit, time or honour, employ at to his glory who entrusted you therewith; in all things study to please God, and so commit your selves and all concernments to his Will, and quietly fubmit to all his dealings with you without murmuring or repining. To a fincere endeavour after all this, you have bound your felves by the Sacrament, where you have taken God to be your God, and have profest your selves his people. Wherefore, I befeech you beware of that dangerous, and yet too common mistake, To think this weight action terminates in it felf; and that all's done when the work's over. I have endeavoured all along to prevent this false conceit, and I care not how oft I inculcate it: for if this be not removed, all my labour will be loft, and fo will yours too, yea, and worst than lost: your receiving of Sacraments will then prove but an idle unprofitable Ceremony, and will help forward your damnation rather than your salvation, whilst you heed not the design of it, nor improve it to its due end. What would you think of that woman, that when she had promised a man to be his wife, and was folemnly married to him in the face of the Congregation, should think there was now nothing more required of her, but that fhe might go whither she list: and live with whom she pleased? Even just fuch is your folly and gross absurdity, who when you have been in the most solemn manner engaging your selves to God, and have taken the Sacrament upon it, that you will live in obedience to him, then think that you may go away and live as you lift. Beware how you make fuch mistakes as these: for believe it, God's in earnest, whether you are or not: if you would not have him take you at your word, you had better never have made such fair promises. Since then the great delign of this duty is, to be an engagement to, and an help for holines 59 ge 9 9 S

lines of life, I shall finish this Treatise with a direction or two for the promoting and carrying on the same.

1. And to that and first let me advise you, to be frequent in considering the engagement you have hereby laid upon your selves, and let that hold and quicken yourto faithfulness. This is the principal thing which we are to do in order to the due improvement of Sacraments to our advantage, even to remember often, what a strict Covenant we thereby entred into, that by the remembrance thereof we may be the more aw'd and restrain'd from doing any thing against it. Thus ought you to make use of your Baptism, which is, I doubt, too seldome minded; often you fhould think, how abfolutely you are bound to take him for your God, to whom you were so early devoted; remember the end of it, and now see to answer and attain it, which you may find fully exprest, Rom. 6.3,4. Therefore are we buried with Christ by Baptism into his Death , that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by (or for) the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Whenever you see a Child baptized, let it bring to your mind, that you were once so dedicated to God, and admitted into his Church; and then think how you ought to walk, who have such a Bond upon you. And thus improve the Lord's Supper, where you have personally owned, and renewed your Covenant with God. Especially make this use of it when you meet with any temptation to fin whatever, or when you begin to grow careless and re-miss in your carriage. If old companions should set upon you, and entice you, or if your own heart should incline you to any former finful courses, then say with your selves, how can I do this, and go back from the Vow that I have made? No I must not, I will not; the Oath of God is upon me, and shall I be for sworn with the living and true God? How feverely will he avenge

avenge himself on all such dissemblers? wicked Herod seemed so fearful of Perjury, that he permitted the murdering of a Prophet to avoid it, and shall I be guilty of it, rather than destroy my lusts, God's and my own greatest enemies? Most justly may I argue, that for my ouths fake, and for those that sate with me, I will not do thus: for not one of my fellow-communicants but might witness to God against me, that they saw me make a Covenant with him. And God himself who stood over me will be witness, as well as Judge. How then should I appear before him with this heinous guilt upon me? Wherefore, Depart from me, ye evil Doers, for I will keep the commandements of my God. If you'll come along with me, and walk in the holy path, come and welcom; but never hope to draw me back again with you, into those ways that have cost me so dear, and which I have protested against. I am now no company for you : for I have taken the Sacramment. Depart Satan, and tempt me not from my allegiance to my Lord and Master, I will not for sake him; I have obliged my felf afresh to be a Christian, a sworn enemy to thy Kingdom, and a faithful Souldier under Christ's Banner, therefore depart from me : for I have taken the Sacrament. And think moreover with thy felf, Hath God been so gracious to me, as to vouchfafe me a pardon for all former transgressions, and to seal it to me at his Table, and shall I go, and wilfully run upon the score again? Should I thus turn his grace into wantonnels and abuse his patience, how justly might I fear that his anger will be kindled against me, and that he will no more have mercy upon me? He, I am sure, will be true to his promises, and shall I be false to mine, and so fall under his threatnings? And after this manner quicken your felves to duty, when ever you are apt to grow liftless to any part of God's service; and also quiet your spi-

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spirits, when they are ready to rise up in tumult and discontent under any cross that befalls you. Then think, I have resigned my self to God as a lowing Father, he him do with me what he please; therefore he still my heart and rebel not against, nor murmur at his righteous will. It you can but thus find your selves more through heart against sin, and better able to put off temptations to it, this is the surest evidence you can have of profiting by the Sacrament.

And beware of imagining, that any space of time can wear out the force of that obligation, which is here laid upon you; which, as unreasonable as it is, one would think was the opinion of multitudes: for they'll be very demure, and folemn a little before they go to the Communion, and a day or two after; but within a yery little while, all feems forgotten, and the y are just fuch asthey were before. But for certain, God torgets not their promifes though they do nor will he forget their breach of them, as they will one day find to their coft, if they take not another courfe. The bonds you are entred into to render homage and obedience to God, will never be cancelled : for this is a debt you will owe as long as you live, though you are always paying it. Baptism will be as firing an engagement upon you to godliness when you are fixty, as when you are but fixteen. And the Tame Strictness the Lords Supper binds you to for a day, to the same doth it bind you all your days. Think now what an horrible thing it would be to run into drunkenness, whoredom, or quarrelling, the same day you have received it, and know your fin is little less hamous, though it be a month or two, or twenty after it: for this breaks your oath as well as that. If the Wife be guilty of Adultery twenty years after marringe, her crime is as great, as if it had been within a week after: for the had oblig'd her felf to conjugal fidelity;

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fidelity, as long as the and her Husband should live. And thus your Covenant with God is not for a Month, or Year only, but for your whole lives. If you should never but once have opportunity to receive the Sacrament, this would ever after remain a forcible engagement upon you: but yet God in his wildom and good providence hath ordered, that this duty should be frequently repeated, that it might the more work upon, and affect our minds, who are prone to be so forgetful and dull. Remember then, the matter is now out of your hands, you have given away your selves to God, and cannot revoke this gift, fince indeed you gave him nothing, but what was his own before. After thefe vows there is no inquiry to be made, whether they should be kept or not. Yet, thus much I'll say to you, if you can find a greater portion and furer friend than God, a better Malter than Christ, better Work than his service, better wages than life eternal, you may take your choice: for I would wish you to nothing for your hurt or loss, nor doth God you may be fure, that bleffed Being, who wants nothing out of himself, nor envies his Creatures any thing that's truly good for them : but till you can thus better dispose of your selves, keep your first love, and if you will keep it till then, I shall never question your perseverance to the last.

And as you are thus to improve this Ordinance to quicken you to, and help you in your duty, so may you make advantage of it for your comfort, by remembring how God stands engaged to you by that Covenant to which he hath here set his seal, and which he will be sure to perform to you that depart not from him. With this consideration repel all temptations to excessive doubtings and despair. When the remembrance of former sins is ready to overwhelm you, have recourse to your sealed pardon, and considertly take the comfort it as-

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fords you. When you find the remnants of corruptis on yet fo ftrong within you, that you are afraid you shall never hold out, remember the Holy Ghost is in Covenant with you to affilt you in your combat, and will bring you off Conqueror, if you throw not away your weapons: And let this encourage you the more to beg his affiftance, yea in all your addresses to God let it strengthen your faith to apprehend him, as in covenant with you. And if you are surprized by any fin. yet whileft it's matter of grief and shame to you, and you are resolv'd to be more watchful for the time to come, let it not cast you into fuch a forrow as tends onely to disquiet and consume your spirits; but remember God hath affured you through Christ the forgiveness of such weaknesses, and they shall not put you out of Covenant with him; but know, if you are hereupon a whit the more encouraged to any fin, it is a very great fign that this promife of pardon at present belonges not to you. In a word, what ever difficulties you are plunged into, relating to Soul or Body, let this still uphold you, to confider, that God hath engag'd himfelt to be with youin all estates and conditions, and to order all things, so that the iffue of them shall be for your advantage. And thus by a frequent confideration of your own engagements at the Lord's Table, and of the priviledges thereby conferr'd upon you, you will find your felves not only comforted and cheared, but very much advantaged. for the walking on more fleadily in the ways of holiness.

2. And to the same end my next counsel is, That the Lord fesus, whom you have here been remembring, mayever be fresh in your thoughts. Let not your remembrance of him be confined to Sacrament Scasons, but let him ever dwell in your hearts by faith and love. Set his example before you, and labour to walk as he walkt, who courted it his most and drink to be doing his Father's will.

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Behave your felf as you believe he would have done, was he in your case. Consider how meek and lowly he was: how little he regarded, yea how much he contemned the riches, honours and applause of the World, and learn you to value them at the fame rate. Confider how patient he was in fuffering; how courteous and gentle to all, to the vilest finners and his bitterest enemies, doing hurt to none, but feeking the good of all: Copy out this Willingly deny your felves, take up your lesson also. cross and follow him? Grudge not to be conformed to him, though in fuffering it felf, and complain not till you are in a worse case than he was, who had not where to lay his head. It's like you think, if Christ was on earth, you'd follow him, though but in the company of poor Women and fisher-men, and though the most of the World should laugh at you for so doing; why know. he'll take it as well at your hands, if you will but tread in his foot-fleps, and adhere faithfully to his interest, though it should cost you the loss of all you had, and of life it felf. And let the dath of Christ be much in your thoughts; let the love of God which was herein shewn. beyour daily, delightful study, and ever leave a sweet tincture upon your Spirits, that by the power of love you may be moved and carried on in the whole of your dury; Let this shame drive you from sin, let this make you laborious and unwearied in his servive. When you are set upon by a temptation, stay so long as to set a bleeding Saviour before you: and think how you have much fuch a case now before you as the Fews once had? to wit whether Christ or Barrabas should be preferr'd; whether your lust should be subdued, or your Lord crucihed afresh; If you approve of the Jews choice in this case, you had best imitate them. If that which would murder your soul deserve to be spared, rather than he who died to fave it, then go on, give Christ a stab, and fin

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fin boldly. Consider further how Christ by his death hath required a title to you, so that you must glorifie him both with body and foul, as being not your own, but bought with a price. Bought you are, not out of the hands of the Father, that you should now have liberty to sin against him, but out of the hands of Satan, that being free from sin, you may become subject to God, and the fer. wants of righteousness. How willfully blind are they who take the more liberty in fin, from the confideration of that death, which was undergone to redeem us from a vain conversation? I Pet. 1.18,19. Where's that man's reason and ingenuity, who when he was fallen into his mafters displeasure, and brought into faviour again by the great industry of the Son, should think he might nowfafely disobey his master? Though the Son pitied the servant fo much, that he was loth to fee him perish, yet he loves his Father fo well, that he never purchas'd an allowance for his disobedience? and indeed the servants difobedience is his destruction. Christ died once to fave the pentent, but he'll never die more to fave those thatre main wilfully disobedient. Consider also, Christ by his death bath purchast abundant grace for the supply of all your wants, and now being at the Fathers right hand, bath full power to give out of this store, wherefore make yse of him to obtain the same. Even as the Egyptians received food from Pharaob by the hands of Tofeph, fo must you receive all you have from the Father by his Son Jesus. Let then the very life you live in the flesh be by faith in the Son of God. By earnest desires vented in fervent prayers, be ever deriving vertue and vigour from him your head. Be as desirous and craving as you are necessitous, as hungry as you are empty, that the good God, according to the riches of his grace, may furnish you with all plenty of spiritual bleffings, till you shall come up to the measure of the stature of Christ's own Julness, Eph.4.13.

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3. If you would thus grow in grace, Be diligent in the use of all the means of grace which Christ bath afforded, and let them be used and improved as means. You must , I have told you, be much in earnest Prayer to God in the name of Christ, for whatever you are wanting in. Let not one day pass without the practice of this duty; you that have Families call them together, and pray with them morning and evening. If you neglect this, how little do vou differ from those Heathens who call not upon God, and upon whom he will pour out his wrath. Be diligent in attending to the publick preaching of the Word, and prepare your felves before hand, with a refolution to obey what shall be made known to you to bethe will of God, and beg his bleffing on what you hear. Confider when you come home, wherein you are particularly concern'd in what you have heard, and accordingly follow it, Setting against that sin, or upon that duty, that you are thereby convinc't of. When you can get tithe, spend it in reading Gods Word, and good Books, which may explain and enforce that Word. Especially you that have not much time on the week-days, bend the remainder of the Lords day, after publick worthip, in some such good employment, and waste it not in idleness: no nor an hour at any other time. Read allo to and with your Family, and ponder it afterwards, that it may be more profitable to you. Often discourse one with another about the matters of your fouls, foberly and seriously; that you may afford each other what help you can. It would be exceeding well, it when you fit with your neighbours, you would be thus employed in holy savoury conference to the use of edifying, rather than in idle chatting and talking of persons, and things that concern you not. But especially they who are of the same family, and are more neerly related, have more opportunity and engagement hereto, and

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and should be admonishing one another daily, and provok. ing to love and good works. For the Lords Supper, I have already directed you at large, and I hope you will pra-Stife answerably, and be frequent therein, not ordinarily neglecting any opportunity when you are call'd to it. But as I delire you not to neglect these exercises of Religion, fo on the other hand as earnestly I would wish you to beware of resting in them, as thinking all Religion is confin'd to them, and so becoming less careful of your carriage, as to justice, temperance, inward piety, and all vertuous actions. Methinks the wretched error of those sects that throw off all external duties of worship, and cry up themselves as above Ordinances, may teach this wholesom lesson to all professing Christians, to beware of resting in the se things and framing to themselves a Religion out of them. Thesel grant are parts of obedience to God; for be hath commanded them, and they are ways for the exercise and encrease of our graces, and to be as helps to godlines; but to think that they give any discharge from the practice of godliness, and make amends for fins we are loth to leave, for which we do as it were compound with God by these formalities, making fin our pleasure, and his service a penance for it; these are conceits so gross, that methinks none but a Papist or one willingly ignorant, should entertain them. Religion is no road of performances, but a new nature attended with a new life? It is the Subjection of the foul to the will of God, expresfing it felf in all commanded acts of obedience; an eager and ingenuous pursuance after the bleffed God in all those ways wherein he is to be found, and whereby he communicates himself to the soul of Man; so that there is no contradiction betwixt inward holiness and outward duties, but much what the same relation, that there is betwixt life and eating, breathing and motion; for in thele

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these the divine life is exprest, exercised and nourished. Butto think that Sacraments, Prayers and Hearing, &c. may serve turn without any inward holiness and universal sincere obedience, is as if a man should think, that the forced motion of a Pupper, should make it pass for a living creature; that great promises may pass for performances, and that knowing what we must do, and talking of it, may serve instead of doing what we are taught. Let them lay this seriously to heart, who, when their practices are ungodly and loose, think to salve all by keeping their Church, and saying their Prayers: and all such who make more ado about the externals in devotion, than about the right ordering of their hearts & lives, whereas all our devotions should tend to better these.

4. If you would make good the promifes you have made at the Lords Table, to live a first and godly life. you will find it of fingular importance, yea of flat necessity, to retain a great watchfulness over all your ways. Ever keep up a fense of the danger you are in, by reafon of the frailty of your nature, the deceitfulness of your hearts, and the many temptations you are every where exposed to; And therefore let this care secretly runthrough the whole course of your actions to beware of being furprized by fin therein. In all employments, companies and affairsftill keep up this warch, and think before-hand, where your danger is greatest, where you aremost apt to be overtaken, and there place the strongelt guard. Set a watch over your eyes, ears, appetites, tongues, hearts and hands, that you be not by them betraid into any miscarriage. When you find your self endangered by a present temptation, then have some solid reason ready at hand to repel it, with store whereof you should alwayes be furnish'd, with reasons drawn from God, Christ, Heaven or Hell, or from your Sacramental engagements; as I shewed before; and be sure, have a fbrong

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a strong resolution to check the first risings and beginnings of fin, before it have gone fo far, that your judg. ment is brib'd and blinded by your affections; and have speedy recourse to the God of all grace, that he would fend you help from above. Consideration, Resolut tion, and Prayer, are three weapons wherewith the Christian Souldier may do wonders against the tallest fons of Anak, that shall assault him in his way to Canaan. Often take account of your felves, and review your behaviour in actions that are past; and let one days experience still teach you how to live the next better. But upon the sense of any miscarriage, let not your guilt drive you farther from God, and put you into unprofitable vexations and horrors, but presently make hast to the throne of Grace, get your peace made with God thorow Christ, and renew your watch with more diligence than ever, but alwaies with the most humble and absolute dependance upon divine affillance. 'Tis too probable, that some lazy wretches will here fly out, as Naaman in a rage did against the Prophet, when he heard he must wash seven times in Jordan for the cure of his Leprofie, which he thought would have been done with a word speaking, so perhaps you'll tell me, that you bad thought receiving of the Sacrament would so have killed your lusts, and cleansed your hearts, that you need have been at little care about them afterward, and will be ready to ask, what good you get by it, if you must take all this pains not with fanding. You flothful fouls, may you not as well ask what good you get by Christs death, and the giving of the Spirit? Since not withstanding both these, you must take pains, or else you are never like to be faved. For know, God will have you employ the faculties he has given you, and the work of Grace is to heal your faculties, and enable them for their proper employments. He that made you reasonable creatures, WIL

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will make you holy and happy as fuch, and the help which he affords, is to bring you to diligence, and affift you therein, and by that means to fave you. Thus Sacraments are onely profitable to the diligent and industrious, their use being to quicken and strengthen. but they are no refuges for the flothful, no encouragements to idleness. Never think that God will make such a way to Heaven, that you may walk in it without ufing your legs. 'Tis you that must do the things required, though it be by Christs strengthning you, for whole sake also your frailties are for n. Wherefore let me renew my advice, that at all time and in all things you would be watchful, and maintain an holy jealousie over those hearts, that have too often shown what they have in them. Take this for the greatest work you have to do in the world, to beware of fin, and to be careful to please God, as the Souldiers whole work is to ferve his General, and the Servants to obey his Master, yea more absolutely than so ought a creature to study his Masters will, and account this work your own greatest happiness. So avoid fin, and all occasions and appearances of it, as you would do the plague in a visited Town; and be as careful to watch all opportunities of doing good both to the fouls and bodies of others, as men ordinarily are of lay. ing hold on their gain. Often ask your felves, wherein God is honoured by you, or others profited, and be ashamed to live to no better purpose than to eat and drink, to fleep and drefs your felves for work or play. And do not object against this constant watchfulness, that it will take up all your time, and hinder your necellary employments: for by using it a while, it will groweven natural to you, and will no more hinder you in your affairs, than it hinders a traveller in his journey, to take heed of running in to bogs and ditches. Is it any hard matter to be always careful, lest you should hurt your

your bodies? Wherever you are, and whatever you are doing, cannot you keep up this care, and yet follow your business well enough? Why then can you not take the same heed of your souls with as little trouble or hindrance.

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7. To keep you in this watchfulness, and guide you in an exact circumspect walking, it will be exceeding profitable for you, at all times to retain upon your minds a very awful sense of the presence of the most boly God. Whatever you are about; remember he observes you, and ponders all your paths, though you perceive not him. Wherefore always order and have your felves as before him. Speak your words as in his hearing; Spend your time, and do all actions as in his fight. You may easier run from under the heavens than out of his eye. And consider he do's not only look on you, but narrowly regard you. and concern himfelf with you, being highly displeased when you run into sin, and takes delight in your holy conversation. In what ever company you are, be not drawn a way by them in a kind of flat Thy humour, as if the general loofness and jollity did engage you to conform to them, but remember, God is in the midst of you, who never gives you a dispensation to be wicked, and whom it more behaves you to please, than all the world befide, though avoid all ensnaring company as much as possible. Let this keep you from fear or shame, when you are call'd to speak against sin; or for God and holines; He's near that will justifie you, you may therefore set your face as a flist. When you are alone, think not you may fin the more fecurely: for God is with you, and eyes all your motions as if he had none but you to mind. In your addreffes to God, a sense of his nearness will much awaken and affect you, and is one of the best helps against wandering thoughts that you can have. Beware of ever being

being so far swallowed up with the noise and hurry of businesses or pleasures, as not to attend to him that stands over you. He that is present every where should be remembred at all times. Read to this purpose, Pfal. 139. Such a powerful habitual sense of a present God should you work into your minds, that you may walk as before him, even when you do not actually think of him: as a Servant is all day doing that work which his Master would have him, though he may not half that time be thinking of him: So though it be needful that you should often actually think of God, yet above all, see that you never so forget him, as to do that which is displeasing to him; And, to conclude this, in any doubted to that, which whilst you are about, you dare not

boldly think of Gods presence.

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6. The last thing I shall say to you for the carrying on of an holy life, to which you are bound by the Sacrament, is, That you be much in ferrous meditation of the lattbings, Death, Judgment, and Eternity. The frequent and lively thoughts of these will have a mighty influence upon your whole course. To consider your latterend, is both a discovery of, and the way to wisdom. Live every day, as he that knows not whether he hath another day to live. Think often, What if I had but mother month or year to spend in the world, bow strictly ma botily flould I then live that time? How careful should The of my thoughts, words, and actions? How thrifty my time? How ferious and affectionate in all my approathes to God? How ready and willing to do or receive good? Why let me now live after this exact manner, since it may "I have not so much as a month or year to come? however, windight I am sure I have not, and my preparations, be by never to foon, will not be lost. Let others funeral propulation mind of yours: and flatter not your felves with

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the hopesof long life, because you are young and healthful; but see to get yout souls in such a condition that a long life may not be so much the matter of your hopes, nor death the cause of your fears. And remember. you are always going on to the Judgment feat of Christ. where you must have a tryal of ten thousand times greater concernment, than those that use to come before Earthly Princes and Judges; when the cafe must be decided where you must live for ever, whether in the highest joys, or the forest torments. Had you not need then now to be getting a good cause: for according to the life you led here in the flesh, will that sentence pass. The wicked must go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. The God who fees you now, will judge you then by Christ the redeemer. Think what a life you shall wish you had led, when you come to the end of it, and must be judged for it, and lead such an one now. When the fugred baits of fin are prefented, and you have much ado to hold off them, then think what bitterness it will be in the end; compare the honey with the gall, the present delight which is vanisht in a moment with the sting, and pain which endures eternally, and then judge and act like reasonable creature. But above all, let your thoughts be even fleept and fwalowed up in the pleasant contemplations of that glory, which shall be revealed in, and bestowed upon the Lord Jesus. Whenever you are ready to faint and give out, remember the joy that is fet before you, and let that remembrance cheer and revive you. Confider what that goodness is, which God hath laid up in himself for them that fear him, till you find your love enflamed towards him; and let love put you upon more frequent thoughts, and earnest longings after him. Only secto fill up all your time with suitable actions, and then let it even please you to see your days post away so fall. Always

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Always keep it on your thoughts, that you are in a journey to a glorious Kingdom, and be often faying, now I am one day, or month, or year nearer than I was before. Stretch out thy felf with a longing look towards thy Fathers house, shortly I shall be in the arms of my dear Saviour, and shall be joyning with Saints and Angels in the triumphant praises of Jehovah and the Lamb. And remember this happiness consists chiefly in being made perfectly holy, and therefore here must that grace be fown and grow up, that shall then be ripened into glory. And the more holy you are, the nearer to Heaven will you get whilst you stay on earth, and the meeter for it will you be when you are taken off from the earth. Ever keep up fuch a fense of the excellency of this future bleffedness, as may blast all other things in your esteem. and deaden the temptations that are taken from pleafures, riches and honours. Oh think how perfectly prowided for must be needs be who shall have God for his portion ! How mad are they that would lofe the leafter hope of this happiness for the whole World? And they that look for such great things, what manner of persoms ought they to be in all holy conversation and godlines? Oh let nothing weary you, or turn you out of the way. Hold out a while longer, and you shall be plac'd out of the reach of all temptations for ever. Fasten uponnothing on this side heaven with any great delight or long flay: But still tell your selves, it's time enough to be happy when God shall take you to himself, so he will but here vouchsafe you that converse with him, whereof we in this state are capable. Let every thing you meet with be as a step toward mount Sion, and raise you nearer to heaven, and make you more desirous of it. And when you have been thus meditateing and preparing, waiting and desiring a while, you hall affuredly find, that your labour was not in vain. Wherefore

Wherefore let such considerations as these make you headfast, unmovable, alwais abounding in your Lords work, 'till at length you shall be translated into his joy.

And thus I have dispath those directions I promised for the promoting of holiness, which was the last thing I had to do. It now remains a that we set our selves resolvedly, and fincerely to the practise of what God hath revealed to be purduty; which it we do a we need not doubt of his assistance and blelling? but upon your perseverance in well-doing ato which we have obliged our selves, may, through our Medicator, considerable expect his gracious acceptance, and his glorious Grown.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jefus, that great Shapard of his fifter by the blod of the everlasting Covenant make you perfection will working in you that which is well pleafing in his fight; through Jefus Chill combon be glory for ever, and ever Amen. Helo, and not in the

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